

JULY 1961

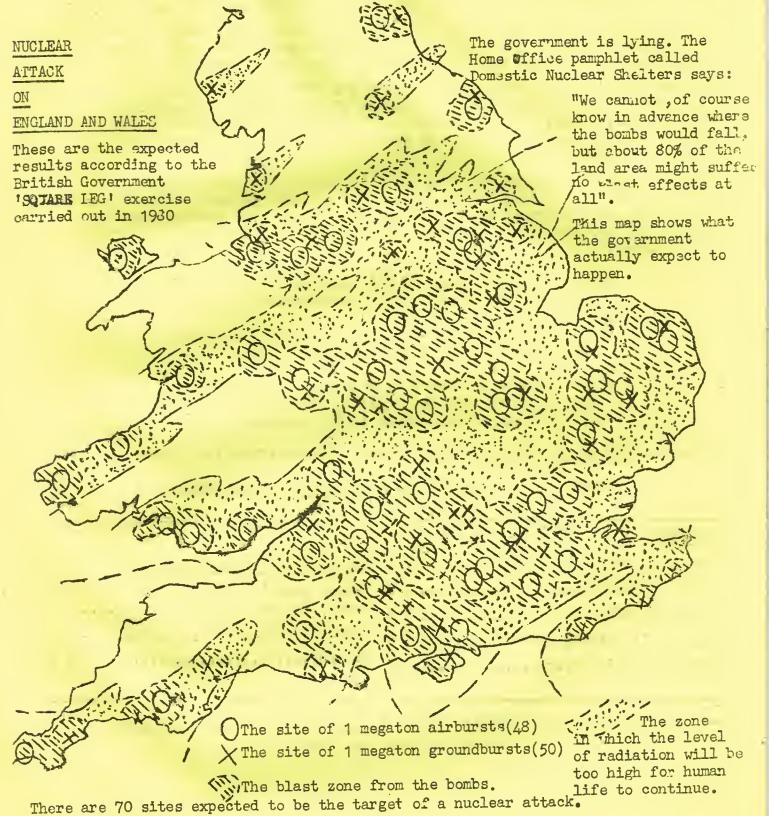
Price: 5 pence  
T'SOR/4/1/43

Luxemburg said we face the question, "WAR OR REVOLUTION?"

# NEWS OF WAR AND REVOLUTION

## NUCLEAR ATTACK ON ENGLAND AND WALES

These are the expected results according to the British Government 'SQUARE LEG' exercise carried out in 1960



The site of 1 megaton airbursts(48)  
X The site of 1 megaton groundbursts(50)

◆ The blast zone from the bombs.  
There are 70 sites expected to be the target of a nuclear attack.

The zone in which the level of radiation will be too high for human life to continue.

What is 'NEWS OF WAR AND REVOLUTION'?

This magazine is for workers. It's for anybody who sides with the workers' struggle against capitalism. It's a place to discuss the interests of the working class and the questions which workers face when they struggle.

We think the workers have already learned some lessons about capitalism and about what they need to do about looking after their own interests. We've tried to sum up the most important of these on the back page. In the articles we've tried to bring forward the news which shows where the interests of the workers lie. They all lead to the question 'War or Revolution?'. This question is going to be answered in the near future. The ruling class will give us the answer WAR unless the working class gives the answer REVOLUTION!

We've tried to write plainly so you can have no doubt about what we mean. We've also tried to write plainly so you can criticise what we've said. We want anybody who agrees with us to see the need to act as a communist.

We were once in a larger organisation but its bureaucracy strangled discussion, kept it away from the working class by making it private, and led to conservatism. It held communists back from the struggles of the working class. We've written about this in the magazine - and the magazine is itself an answer to it.

We don't want you to join the News group in the way you join a party or a club. We don't want your money or your good wishes. We want to find comrades who see the need to speak up in whatever way they can for communism - in person when workers gather together, or by putting out leaflets, bulletins or magazines.

\* Send for more copies of this magazine. Sell it, or give it away, or put it into newsagents and bookshops.

\* Send us leaflets or magazines you put out yourself. We'll take up what we can in our own pages.

\* Tell us what you think this magazine ought to do and say. Send us news and articles for it. We'll answer all such letters in public in the magazine.

Write to NEWS OF WAR AND REVOLUTION at this address: (from 15th August, 1981)  
'NEWS' c/o 70 High Street, Leicester, Great Britain.

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"The working class was terribly strong because it was terribly alone."  
- someone in Spain in 1936

## WARS ARE CAUSED BY CAPITALISM

Capitalism causes the arms race. In every country the ruling class tries to get weapons which give it the best chance to survive war - and to make war on others. If they can't get nuclear weapons, they'll make do with guns and tanks. From Afghanistan to Africa they already fight it out with knives and fists when there's nothing else. The only weapon the ruling class ever really needs is the worker in khaki. It's all they've ever needed to make war.

CND helps capitalism every time it says that it's nuclear weapons which bring World War III nearer. What's the truth? Capitalism alone will cause World War III, and will fight it with whatever weapons are around.

CND and the Labour Party are every bit as dangerous to the workers as neutron and H-bombs. They'll have done their bit for capitalism when they get you into khaki to defend a non-nuclear Britain. It's one way of getting the only weapon the ruling class really needs - YOU.

World War III will make a graveyard of Europe. Britain will be atom-bombed because it's an economic competitor, and world capitalism has again got to the point where industry must be destroyed on a large scale. Capitalism has no other way ahead. That's why every British government plans for it - and lies about its plans to you.

Capitalism destroyed a lot of the human race in 1914-18 and again in 1939-45. The next time it will be quite fatal to the human race.

No government on earth can stop World War III. No place on the planet can opt out of it either. There is only one way you can be serious about stopping World War III. If you stick at 'Ban the Bomb', you won't delay World War III by a fraction of a second.

You must help the working class to make a world revolution. The cause of wars must go.

END ALL WARS - DESTROY CAPITALISM !

## CRISIS IN BRITAIN

Nobody denies there is a crisis. No juggling with figures can hide it any more. All the bosses and unions argue about are measures to bring it under control sooner or later.

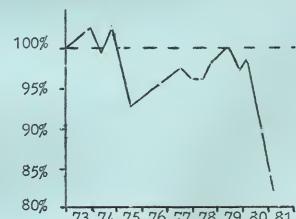
Nor do the bosses and unions deny that it's having an effect on living standards. All they debate is how far some effects are, and how long they must last.

Both Labour and Tory must share the blame for the figures which tell the tale of Britain's crisis. Labour because they began to cut industry in the 70's (who began public spending cuts and massive steel closures?). The Tories because they have built on Labour's foundations. Between them they have created a devastation that will last as long as capitalism survives.

Both Labour and Tory have set their targets for inflation, wages, public spending. They've tried to convince us they are in control of at least this part of the world capitalist system.

Both Labour and Tory have failed over and over again to meet their targets. They are no longer in control of their own system. The economic laws of this capitalist system are now hell-bent on a world-wide devastation that defies the attempts of all parties to control it.

Look at the cut back in British manufacturing. It's 20% below what it was in 1973. The goods can't be sold.



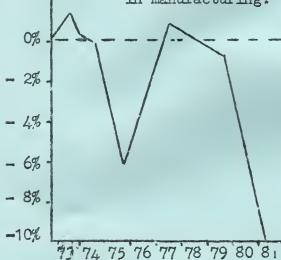
In Britain we were suffering falling exports because of the strength of the pound. Now we are suffering rising import bills because of the falling pound! It's Catch 22 - and both left

and right try to tell us they can control the economy!

Whatever the fortunes of the pound, the figures which chart the crisis and the growing poverty of the working class continue.

Unemployment is now almost 2.7 million. Without Youth Opportunities school leavers alone would swell that to 3 million. Jcb Creation Schemes hide unemployment by several hundred thousand. More than one in nine workers is out of work. This spreads the workers' defiance against the crisis from the factories to the whole working class community.

Employment is 10% down on 1973. in manufacturing:



Recent pay settlements are in single figures. This fact lets Chancellor Howe suggest the next round should settle below 5%. Inflation still is nearly 12% and few forecasters expect single figures. The missing 7p in the £ means we go without food or clothes, house repairs or leisure, or gather even more debts.

More important for the longer term prospect is the 'bottoming out' of the recession still seems to be a fake. Even Thatcher can't disguise that. Between April and February this year industrial production fell 0.6% (1.1% without North Sea Oil). Manufacturing output is down nearly 12% over 1975, which was hardly a boom year. It's not hard to see why Prior says that official unemployment will soon reach 3 million.

Cataloguing the crisis like this is easy. The CBI, the economic reviews, the left, and the right, will do it for us. They want us to believe it's inevitable, that there's nothing to do about it. We should just sit back and take the medicine.

The real question for workers is to overcome this fatalism and see what to do about it.

The bosses offer us many traps even then. For Thatcher & Co. we should carry on as we are, and the recession will one day go away.

For Foot & Co. we should help get the Labour Party back in shape.

For Benn & Co. we need more nationalisations and a whole rag-bag of state controls.

Workers need to remember clearly all the lessons of recent Labour and Tory governments. Indeed, of all Labour governments with their wage controls and industry rationalisations.

Let the bosses keep their nest little arguments about whether to trim this or that state budget, raise or lower taxes. For the workers whose living is at stake these alternatives only hide the real issues.

The real question is not whether Tory or Labour shut most factories, or how best to defend Britain from World War III.

The real problem that workers have to face is a world crisis of capitalism. This crisis offers us only unemployment and poverty. Its only solution in capitalist terms is a war which will destroy civilisation on this planet.

This crisis brings the spectre of Third World poverty and Third World War right home to Russia, Europe and America.

Neither left nor right can manage their way out of this crisis. They can only attack the working class in a bid to make their national industry a better competitor.

As this strategy fails they can only prepare for a war they can't afford to pay for - and a war that nobody will win.

The problem for workers is to escape this capitalist logic. Instead of falling into the trap of analysing this or that economic policy, workers must attack the root of the crisis. This is the capitalist system itself and all its hired hands who try to tell us they can manage and control it.

There's only one answer. Put workers' interests first. Only workers can do that. The struggles for jobs and wages, against closures and cuts, are all part of a world-wide struggle of the working class against capitalism.

These struggles must become part of one class struggle to destroy capitalism, and build communism in the wake of that revolution. This is the only way to rid humanity of crises and wars and to build a free society for all workers.

#### WORKERS NEWS FROM EVERYWHERE

##### China

Workers in Shanghai are militant. For every £1 they get in wages, the workers in the quiet province of Guizhou get 22 pence. What's the result? Workers in Guizhou die young. It pays to strike against the bosses in China.

##### Britain

The British food mountain now costs a record £760 million every year. It's rising by £24 every second.

You pay 4 pence a day towards it. Don't think you're helping the starving millions with this. It's a lie that food mountains get sent to Africa and Asia. 97% just feeds the rats in EEC warehouses.

Despite this way of keeping up production in Britain, overall it's fallen below what it was 6 years ago. British Steel alone cut production by nearly half (49%) last year.

##### Britain

The ruling class doesn't just cut living standards by cutting wages or putting you on the dole. The 1980 Housing Act was another way. It's put council house rents up 20-30%. On the average wage that means a cut in living standards of 3 p in the £ this year.

##### Afghanistan

Russia forced a border settlement in June. It's decided where its boundaries lie along the Wakhan Corridor. An Afghan army in this strip of land will now guard the right flank of the Russian armies which are lined up along the border with China.

Russia still has 80,000 troops in Afghanistan and 150,000 nearby in Russia. When the Afghan army is loyal and has new arms, most of these Russian troops will be deployed inside Russia to support the armies on the Chinese border.

China and the USA have a joint base in Xinjiang, China. It tracks Russian missiles and planes. In gratitude the US is promising new weapons to China. It's also got the World Bank to give £200 million to China.

The final war between Russia and China will be part of World War III.

##### Egypt

There were bread riots in Egypt in 1977. They terrified the government.

In June this year more riots in Cairo left 11 dead. The riot police arrested 200 and blamed religious strife.

Sadat blamed communist agitators.

Nobody blamed the stinking poverty in the Zawia el Hamra slums. Capitalism has only one answer. It calls out the troops to shoot down those who protest.

##### Israel

The Labour Party under Peres didn't win the election. They did get an even bigger victory than this. The vote was 50% up on 1977 because workers were fooled that Begin is a war-monger and Peres isn't.

No election can stop war.

Begin wants workers in khaki to grab land. Peres wants workers in khaki to keep the peace. The ruling class in Israel just gives different excuses for war.

##### Britain

Unemployment went up 62% in the last 12 months.

If it goes on rising like this all jobs in Britain will have gone in 6 years.

South Africa

Black unions are stopping strikes in South Africa by enforcing the official cooling off period.

Workers in the Eastern Cape won't let the unions do this to them. The bosses sacked several thousand out of hand. The police will deport the sacked workers.

Workers in the Transvaal won't let the unions do this to them either. They struck anyway and the police fired on them. The police, the bosses, and the unions eventually get round to backing each other up.

Britain

Prices now rise by 12 pence in the pound each year. The bosses talk about 5% pay rises. For the average worker paying tax this means a pay cut of £10 a week.

The unions talk of 10% pay rises. Pay rises need to be over 15% before tax just to keep up with price rises at the moment.

The unions and the bosses are both forcing down wages. But that's not all. How much extra do you need to make up for the cuts in hospitals and social services? You can't buy a hospital or an ambulance each time you need one. You can't put a price on death and injury.

The living standards of the workers are being cut and cut - and no figures tell the full story.

Ireland

Living standards are down and unemployment is up. What happened when the ruling class held an election?

On their own Fine Gael and Labour didn't fool enough workers that they had an answer to this.

On their own Fianna Fail and the splinter parties didn't distract enough workers by talking of the troubles in the North.

So the election was almost a dead heat. Fine Gael and Labour got 80 seats. Fianna Fail got 78 seats. But nobody lost!

Together Fianna Fail, Fine Gael and Labour won a victory for the ruling class. They got workers to vote, and to trust in parliament and the ruling class, one more time.

France

The French ruling class has just persuaded over 70% of the population to take part in the meaningless ritual of voting. The Socialist Party fooled a majority of workers that it's better to have left wing masters for the next five years.

To rub home their victory over the working class, the Socialist Party has invited the Communist Party to join its attack on the workers.

Mitterand spent the weeks between his narrow victory in the Presidential elections and the Socialist landslide in the Assembly turning election promises into actions.

He put up the minimum wage and announced measures which he said would cut unemployment. After increasing hardship under Giscard, many workers saw Mitterand as an angel of mercy.

French workers haven't seen a left government at work for many years, but other workers have. National boundaries have cut them off from the lessons which the workers learned in Britain, West Germany, the USA and behind the Iron Curtain.

The programme put forward by the French Socialists sounds very like that of the British Labour Party in the 60's and 70's. Their grants and rebates were introduced for bosses taking part in job-training and re-training schemes. Then workers won large wage rises in the immediate wake of a Labour victory.

Mitterand is putting this forward as a way to deal with the crisis. It's got no more chance of doing that in France than it had in Britain five and fifteen years ago.

These measures didn't fail simply because the crisis was still there after Labour had gone.

From the bosses point of view these measures did work - because they softened up the workers for attacks on their living standards that came later.

This lesson was learnt in Britain.

After wage rises and public sector growth in the mid-70's there came the Social Contract. It pegged wages as inflation got higher and higher. It brought the swap of jobs and productivity that led to longer dole queues.

This Social Contract came about through the unity of the left, Labour Party and the TUC. In the end, workers found it had all been a lie and they were worse off after all. The workers' struggles tore apart the unity of the unions and the Labour Party, and the Tories picked up the attack where Labour had left off.

In France the Socialist Party has got the CP to join it in the government so as to get the same left unity that's attacked workers so successfully in other countries. They've got rid of the break between the two parties, and the unions they each run.

Today this union of the left makes pretty promises and good-looking gestures. Tomorrow we'll see the real economic programme once again. They'll try to persuade workers that sacrifices are needed to rebuild an economy that's been run down by decades of right-wing misrule. Just as Labour did in Britain.

Workers in France are going to see that rule by the left is just like rule by the right. It means poverty, unemployment and no less a preparation for war.

And while the workers in France are learning these bitter lessons - the left in other countries is going to ram Mitterrand's victory down the workers' throats. They'll use his example to try to get workers to rebuild left unity, to forget what they've learned, and have faith again.

There is no halt to the crisis for the working class. There's no cure through voting, or trusting in the bosses' parties of left or right. This way there's only empty promises that pave the road to war.

The workers' road goes another way - towards revolution. Workers everywhere must put their interests first - and that means defying the bosses' parties of left and right.

#### POLAND

The Polish state shook to its foundations when the workers struck last August. The state unions were abandoned. The workers needed no unions and no leaders to organise themselves and spread the strikes.

The government agreed to reforms at Gdańsk, but the workers had already made a fatal mistake. They put their trust in the new union, Solidarity.

Solidarity seemed good at the start. It called strikes. It seemed to oppose the rest of the state. The workers gave up their organisation to Solidarity.

Solidarity took - and the workers gave. Strikes were postponed. Threats were withdrawn. Strikes were stopped in their tracks. Now it's done all this - what the official unions couldn't do - Solidarity has begun to police the working class.

It's sacking workers it calls dissidents. The secret police used to do this but it isn't too small a job for Solidarity to handle. Solidarity's also into the big things too - explaining how workers must be quiet because Poland's exports of food and coal are too low. It's getting the workers to help the ruling class with its problems.

Poland can't repay its debts to other capitalist states. Western banks want mines and factories as security for new loans. Food in Poland is even more scarce than it was. Rations will soon be down to the level that caused the bread riots in 1956.

The army shot 54 workers then, and hundreds were wounded or went missing in Polish gaols. The Polish ruling class will try to force the same poverty again - but this time Solidarity says it really can't be helped. Solidarity is there to sell lower wages, harder work and greater scarcity to the workers - and to nip all riots in the bud.

If Solidarity, and the generals who make up the new government, still can't get industry going again - then help is near. The armies of the Warsaw pact finished getting ready for an invasion of Poland last April. The tanks are sitting on the border.

Solidarity will serve the ruling class by serving up the workers on a plate.

WHERE 'THE NEWS' CAME FROM

In June we left a group called 'The International Communist Current'. At first glance this ICC seems to have the same politics as we do, but we have to warn you against the ICC because this impression is deceptive.

The ICC was always wary of giving in to capitalist ideas. In some ways it resisted these well - so much so that the main political points on our back page are still defended by the ICC.

Because it won't give in on these points, capitalist society hasn't been able to use the ICC against the workers. But a communist organisation also dies when it's no longer any use to the workers.

The ICC never realised that capitalist society can make a communist organisation quite useless by turning it into a sect. Two things happened to make the ICC into a sect, and we want communists to understand these things so that it needn't happen again.

Firstly, too many ICC members left it up to a few to make the important decisions. These few at first took this silence for consent, but later they took it for granted.

The members of the ICC separated out into leaders and led. A management came to exist - and a party line was handed down on all important questions. The ICC system assumed that all its members were active in discussing what the organisation was doing. It assumed there was agreement amongst the members.

But when discussion and agreement only needed to be the raising of your hand in a vote every two years - and nothing else was expected of members in contributing to a decision - then the ICC found itself with:

- \* a permanent elite to run the organisation and take its decisions

- \* a hierarchy to ensure that decisions were carried out

- \* one, and only one, view on all important questions

\* a system of discussion that was devoted to executing decisions rather than making them.

Secondly, the ICC was thrown off balance by the pace of events in the real world. When Afghanistan was invaded the ruling class in the West wanted war scare. The ICC took fright and added its own propaganda to that of the ruling class.

When Iraq fought Iran, the ICC said it was all an American plot. They agreed with the ruling class that war itself is under control. In this period, the ICC has repeated two fatal mistakes which socialists made just before World War I. It's joined in war scares and it's fed the illusion that war is only diplomacy.

When the Polish workers struck, the ICC went to the other extreme and at first ignored the fact that unions everywhere were building their own reputations or Solidarity's lie of helping the Polish workers. Socialists also misread the workers' struggle on a world scale just before the first World War.

When it comes to 'War or Revolution?', the ICC is no longer sure which way the wind blows. It's obsessed with working out what the ruling class is up to from day to day, and in trying to see if revolution or war is round the corner.

The ICC is trying to guess the answer to the question 'War or Revolution?' instead of trying to be part of the answer.

Put together the organisational decay and the fortune-telling and you have disaster. They reinforce each other. The ICC is making rigid and inflexible prophecies that, far from being helpful to the workers, can only mislead them. At best the ICC has become useless to the workers' struggle.

In May 1981 Mitterrand was elected President of France. In the June elections more French workers than ever before were conned into voting for left parties, and the Communist Party joined a Western European government for the first time in 30 years.

Throughout these events the ICC felt the most important thing to say to the workers was that Mitterrand and the Socialists would lose, and that the ruling class had planned it that way.

After the election the ICC thought the most important thing to say was that the ruling class had made a mistake.

We left the ICC to start again.

SOCIETY IS FALLING APART

Amsterdam, Belfast, Berlin, Bristol, Brixton, Derry, Liverpool, Manchester, Miami, Newark, Southall, Soweto, Watts, Wood Green, Zurich .....

In all countries riots have become another result of the crisis. The course of the economic crisis can be plotted in figures. It's also plotted by rubber bullets and petrol bombs.

The capitalist system can no longer justify itself to all citizens. It's no longer true that hard work at school and factory will lead to job security and a higher standard of living. The economic crisis leads to a crumbling away of ruling class ideas. With these goes respect for the state and its authority.

The capitalist state responds by stepping up the power of the state. It can't put back the ideas that are supposed to control most citizens. Instead it puts riot police like the French CRS or the British SPG onto the street every other day. They aren't 'special' anymore - they're normal.

When the velvet glove's been torn off there's only the mailed fist to keep order. The police now pick you up if you're black, if you're young, if you're Irish - just if you're there. This is state terror.

Riots like Liverpool are an attempt to fight back against state terror. They are part of the battle against capitalism - the same battle the workers wage everywhere.

Don't shut your eyes to this. Don't be fooled its just kids, or race hate, or defence of black communities - and that it's nothing to do with you because you don't happen to live in Liverpool 8. Every new day brings more riots and more state terror. It will reach out to touch you, to catch you up.

Every fight against police terror, bad housing and unemployment **is** part of the workers' struggle.

The fights on the streets fit in with strikes in the factories like a lock fits a key.

Together they make up the struggle against capitalism, whose decay is seen in every slum and every factory on earth. Together they are the road to the revolution that will destroy capitalism.

THE AMBULANCEMEN'S STRIKE

Ambulance workers face the same problem as nurses. A strike means more pain for the patients. A strike means death for somebody. You can bet it won't be Lady Di or the like. Some worker, who hasn't got the money to buy scab medicine, will be the one to die.

What's to be done about this? Let's be clear that workers and their families will suffer if health workers don't strike. They suffer whatever happens.

If the bosses and the unions force down the wages of health workers - then it's easier to cut the wages of all workers.

If the working conditions of health workers get worse - then more patients will die waiting for fewer ambulances and hospital beds.

Workers die whatever happens. It's just that the bosses can make something of it in a strike - and unions can use it to make the strike 'responsible' - that is, useless.

When it comes to a strike of health workers it's easy to see that solidarity between workers is a practical question. Other workers must strike with the nurses or the ambulance men. This mustn't be one-day efforts, but all-out strikes to get what the workers want in one go.

All the workers on strike must take over hospitals and ambulances and get medical care to workers and their families. When a general strike is running the workers can take care of their own class.

It's suicide - in every way - to let nurses and ambulance men go it alone. That way all workers lose twice over. Once on their own wage claims, and once on staying alive.

Luxemburg said we face the question, "WAR OR REVOLUTION?"

# NEWS OF WAR AND REVOLUTION

## WE ARE AGAINST

CLASS SOCIETY - workers are exploited as long as class society continues.

CAPITALISM, EAST & WEST - Russia, China, Cuba, Yugoslavia, Albania and all the police states are as capitalist as Britain and the USA.

THE WAGES SYSTEM - the bosses and the state pay workers less than the value of the goods they make.

SOCIALISM IN ONE COUNTRY - workers cannot make communism while capitalism survives anywhere on earth.

NATIONALISM - the workers have no country.

WAR - wars have killed millions of workers this century.

PARLIAMENT AND ELECTIONS - no capitalist state, nor any change in it, can help the workers at all.

LEFT & RIGHT PARTIES - Tories, Liberal, Labour, SDP, CP, NF, Trotskyists and Macists - all serve the ruling class.

UNIONS - the unions are dead, and no new unions can be made to serve the workers. All unions serve the ruling class.

SELF-MANAGEMENT & NATIONALISATION - workers can't run industry in their own interests in a capitalist society.

COMMUNISTS ORGANISING WORKERS AND TAKING POWER FOR THEM - only the whole working class can build communism.

THE OPPRESSION THAT IS PART OF CAPITALIST SOCIETY

## WE ARE FOR

WORKERS DEFENDING THEIR LIVING STANDARDS  
Unions and capitalist parties defend the bosses' profits, cut workers' wages, and raise prices and productivity. The workers have no interest in this happening to them.

WORKERS SPREADING THEIR OWN STRIKES  
Shop stewards and union officials will look after their own interests and those of capitalism. Workers alone must decide about their strikes in mass meetings. They must carry out their decisions themselves - through delegates they elect and control at mass meetings.

WORKERS SPREADING THEIR OWN STRIKES  
Unions which offer to spread strikes are setting a trap to limit them. Workers must spread strikes by their own flying pickets and delegations.

WORKERS STRUGGLES AGAINST THE STATE  
Struggles must link up across all industries, working class communities, and countries, and attack all parts of the capitalist state.

WORKERS MAKING THEIR OWN REVOLUTION  
No party can do this. Only workers can organise and control the workers' councils which will destroy capitalism.

REVOLUTION ON A WORLD SCALE  
The Russian revolution was lost when it failed to spread to other countries.

WORKERS ORGANISING SOCIETY  
The class which produces the goods is the only class which can bring communism.

COMMUNISM  
A society of production for human needs, with no classes, no wages system, and no frontiers.

WE ARE FOR COMMUNISTS SPEAKING OUT ON ALL THESE QUESTIONS.

T/SDR/4/1/147

MASS STRIKE IN POLAND

August 1981

10 pence - special issue on the Polish strikes

Luxemburg said we face the question, " WAR OR REVOLUTION ?"

# NEWS OF WAR AND REVOLUTION



WORKERS OF THE WORLD UNITE !  
YOU HAVE NOTHING TO LOSE BUT YOUR  
CHAINS !

## "WHAT IS "NEWS OF WAR & REVOLUTION"?

This magazine is for workers. It's for anybody who sides with the workers' struggle against capitalism. It's a place to discuss the interests of the working class and the questions which workers face when they struggle.

We think the workers have already learned some lessons about capitalism and about what they need to do about looking after their own interests. We've tried to sum up the most important of these on the back page.

This issue of 'News' is rather different from the regular issues. This time we've dealt with just one question: 'Poland 1980-1981'. In each issue we'll try to bring forward the news which shows where the interests of the workers lie. It all leads to the question 'War or Revolution'. This question is going to be answered in the near future. The ruling class will give us the answer WAR unless the working class gives the answer REVOLUTION.

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- \* Send for more copies of this magazine. Sell it, or give it away, or put it into newsagents and bookshops.
- \* Send us leaflets or magazines you put out yourself. We'll take up what we can in our own pages.
- \* Tell us what you think this magazine ought to do and say. Send us news and articles for it. We'll answer all such letters in public in the magazine.

Thanks to the readers who sent us money and comments on the last issue of 'News'. We think the subscription should be £1 to cover costs and postage for six issues. Send it as postage stamps or as a cheque made payable to 'News'.

WRITE } 'NEWS' c/o 70, HIGH STREET,  
TO } LEICESTER, GREAT BRITAIN

BEFORE THE 1980-81 STRIKE WAVE

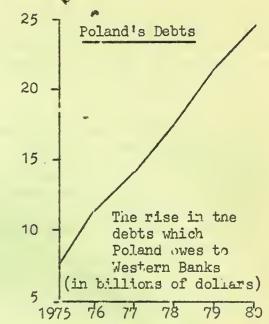
Poland grows a lot of food. Not much of it gets to the Polish working class. It's true that the Polish workers don't earn very much. The average wage in 1979 was just over £16 a week, and that was the year when prices went up 24% more than wages.

But this isn't the only reason that the workers go hungry. The Polish state only lets the workers buy some of the food they produce.

Food shops are often quite empty except for tins of tomatoes. Where does the food go? Well, it's a fact that the Polish state finances itself by selling the food abroad. You can't go to Poland if you want a tin of Polish ham or chopped pork - you've a better chance of finding that in a British supermarket.

Poland owes a lot to Western banks: £12 billion in 1980, and it's been doubling that debt every 2 or 3 years since 1975.

The food's sold to pay the interest on the debts. It also owes a lot of money to Russia, and most of its industrial production goes to Russia.



Russia siphons off Poland's wealth at an incredible rate - and Poland sells off hard currency goods to the West to keep the raw materials and technology coming in that will let its industries go on supplying Russia.

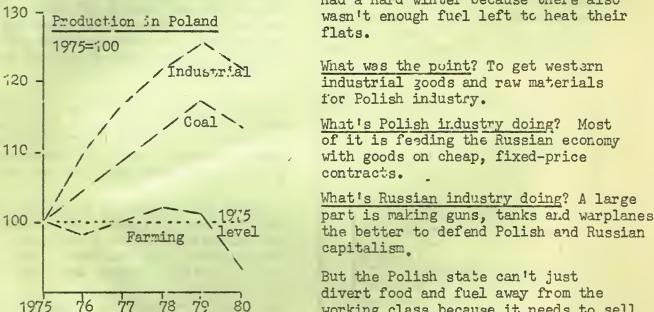
It's the same story with coal. In 1980 Poland exported 43 million tonnes of coal, mostly to the West. The Polish state had to close down 70 of the 91 cement kilns in the country because it had sent the coal abroad. The Polish workers had a hard winter because there also wasn't enough fuel left to heat their flats.

What was the point? To get western industrial goods and raw materials for Polish industry.

What's Polish industry doing? Most of it is feeding the Russian economy with goods on cheap, fixed-price contracts.

What's Russian industry doing? A large part is making guns, tanks and warplanes the better to defend Polish and Russian capitalism.

But the Polish state can't just divert food and fuel away from the working class because it needs to sell



them abroad. The workers have to be fed - otherwise, no workers to keep capitalism going. The state has also got to cheapen the cost of producing the food, the fuel and industrial goods.

That's why it's not enough for the Polish state to keep the shops empty, or put food on ration for the workers. Wages have to be held down as well, and the price of small quantities of food and fuel allowed to the workers has to be driven up.

The state pays out the wages, and then charges more for the goods it supplies to the workers, so that's just the same as cutting wages in the first place. Food is still kept short - as is anything else the workers could buy - because then the workers have to hand back part of their wages to the state: the money's put in savings accounts because it can't buy anything.

The trick wouldn't work if the Polish workers saw that this money was worthless and just going back to the state again - so the Polish bosses keep prices very high and goods very scarce. They even have raffles where workers can win the chance of buying a Fiat car - which the workers themselves made in Poland - after three years and at several times the price it fetches abroad.

All the talk of food subsidies by the Polish government is just hypocrisy. The Polish state isn't being kind to the Polish workers because it subsidises food by £4 billion a year. It certainly wants to look kind, but as it pays the wages and fixes food prices in the first place, it's just looking for praise for its skill in cheating the workers. The money's just being shuffled from one drawer into another.

When food runs short in Poland, and the price of what there is gets higher, it's the signal for the Polish workers to defend their living standards. The Polish state can trick some with their never-never system on Fiat's, but the workers can't manage without food.

In 1956 there were bread riots and large strikes and demonstrations in Poznan during June and July. The Polish government - what the Communist Party calls a people's government - reacted in its usual way: it shot down workers in the demonstrations.

But 6000 workers in the Zeran car factory did something else. They kicked out the union and ran their own strike - and workers in other factories did the same.

Gomulka was brought in as the new state boss to look amenable to the workers' demands. The Polish state was scared stiff. The strike was bought off with an increase in the food ration. Only when the workers organisation had disappeared were the militant workers picked off and sent to labour camps.

Kindly Mr Gomulka tried to put through a big rise in food prices on 12th December 1956. When the dockers and the textile workers went on strike, kindly Mr Gomulka had his police shoot down over 200 workers.

An even kinder-looking Mr Gierek was brought in this time to replace Mr Gomulka, because the workers had again formed their own organisation, and had taken over shipyards and factories in Gdansk and Stettin.

The Communist Party can find a new mask for the Polish state as long as the workers don't see what's always hiding behind it.



Gierek tried to fob off the workers with promises of more democracy in the unions and the rest of the state. But in 1970, unlike 1950, there weren't any free trade unions to soften up the workers first.

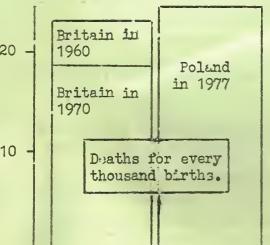
Point 1 of the strikers' demands was that food prices were cut. Point 2 was that holding a party card shouldn't be the only way to get a decent wage. Gierek couldn't get the workers to switch Point 1 for Point 2 - so prices were cut. Then he deported the militant workers just like Mr Gomulka did.

It was much the same story in 1976. This time it was Mr Gierek's turn to put up food prices - but afterwards the workers didn't let themselves be picked off. They threatened more strikes if any worker's door got knocked at midnight by the state police,

What about 1980? Food production in Poland dropped 8%. Floods in March and April destroyed a million hectares of crops. The Polish government was faced with importing an extra million tonnes of grain.

But the economic disaster wasn't caused by bad weather. It was the outcome of the crisis that's gripping capitalism everywhere - East and West. It's easy to see that Poland's a capitalist country, just like Britain or the USA. It's gotta ruling class, and a capitalist state with police, unions, and a Communist Party to defend ruling class interests.

#### Infant Mortality



#### POLISH CAPITAL IS DRENCHED IN THE BLOOD OF THE WORKERS

The recorded sudden deaths of Polish miners in just one month:

October 3rd 1979: 7 miners killed at the Nowa Ruda mine.

October 10th 1979: 33 miners killed at the Dymitrow mine.

October 31st 1979: 22 miners killed at the mines in Czlechowice-Dziedzice.

Slow deaths from just in the lungs and overwork aren't given.

It's got the same capitalist crisis as every other country in the world.

Production is dropping everywhere: industrial production was down 4% in Poland in 1980, and coal was down 3%. Poland needed another \$5 billion from the banks to pay for higher-priced raw materials and to replace worn out machinery (the Army was sent out to repair it, but couldn't). Poland can't repay the money it already owes. Polish goods aren't as good as other countries anymore, they cost more relatively, and so they aren't selling.

Russia stepped up war production - the only boom industry for capitalism - and made even greater demands on Polish industry to supply its needs, and Poland's ability to pay for the weapons it produced.

The Polish bosses were killing off even more workers than normal with their insatiable demands for higher work rates - but the Polish unions couldn't suck enough blood from the workers.

Cellulose production at Jelenia Gora had to stop because of the fumes. 25% of Poland's aluminium production had to be shut down at Krakow because hydrogen fluoride gas - which kills on a large scale - was pouring from the overworked chimney extractors. The four shift system in the Polish mines ground to a halt after a few months because the workers were exhausted.

Working conditions in Poland were rapidly getting worse. Wages bought 2½% less than the previous year. Food shops were almost empty.

What had the Polish workers learned?

In 1956 they'd learned that they had to strike to defend their living standards. Whatever the Communist Party called the Polish state - workers still had to strike for their own interests.

In 1970 the workers in Gdańsk learned they had to defend their strike with force - they fought the police and burned down the Communist Party headquarters.

In 1970 the workers learned they had to spread their own strikes and organise their own committees in the strikes. Gierek only gave in on the price rises when the strike spread to the textile workers in Łódź.

In 1976 the workers at Radom, and the Ursus tractor factory near Warsaw struck, they organised their own strikes and began to spread it; they went onto the attack against the police and the rest of the state. They burned down the Communist Party headquarters like in Gdańsk 1970, and welded girders across the railway lines to stop freight and troop movements. They went one more step: they stopped police picking off militant workers after the strike. Prices were cut in 24 hours. A new strike wave began in July, 1980.

PHASE ONE: JULY - AUGUST 1980

(a) The Road to Gdańsk

The immediate cause of the mass strike movement was an increase in food prices.

On 1st July the government announced that meat would go up by 30 - 90%. They had already tried to do away completely with the monthly cheap sugar ration. Though they backed down on that when workers' meetings demanded pay rises, the dire state of the Polish economy left no choice but to go ahead with other rises.

The government hoped that workers would remember the deaths and arrests that followed the earlier strikes and hold back.

The government was wrong. Like every ruling class they only get their way when workers hold back from a fight. When the working class takes on the bosses and the state, then the ruling class has to make concessions for the moment - if it is to stay the ruling class.

One day after Gierek announced the price rises, workers at the Ursus tractor factory in Warsaw were on strike. They were threatened with the sack. In reply they held mass meetings of all the workers on strike and elected a strike committee free from the state unions.

Within ten days strikes were taking place all over Poland. They weren't planned by any union, official or otherwise. They spread as the response of workers who saw their poverty getting worse.

EXTENT OF THE JULY/AUGUST STRIKE MOVEMENT IN 1980

JULY 2 : Ursus Tractor Factory, Warsaw; Tczew(Gdansk region);  
3-10: Warsaw; Świdnica; Zeran; Łódź; Gdańsk;  
mid July: Lublin; Krasniki; Skolimów; Wola; Chełm; Wrocław; Gdańsk; Huta-Warsaw;

AUGUST week one : Warsaw;  
14: Lenin shipyard, Gdańsk;  
15: General strike in Gdańsk; Gdynia; Inter-Factory Committee(MKS) formed;  
18: General strike in Gdańsk/Gdynia/Sopot; Szczecin; Tarnow;  
20: Elbląg; Tczew; Kołobrzeg and elsewhere;  
28: Silesia; Wrocław; Pownan; Nova-Huta; Rzeszów; Inter-Factory Committees were formed in many towns; delegates from Ursus were sent to Gdańsk.

On 31st August, the agreement that ended the movement was signed.

The government strategy was to isolate each strike. They granted whatever wage rise was necessary to get a factory back to work. Most wage rises were between 10 and 20%.

The success of so many workers in getting pay rises was the main factor in spreading the strikes rapidly. Workers organised the strikes through mass meetings of all strikers. These meetings elected strike committees which took the demands of the meeting to the bosses. The committees came back to the mass meetings for approval or rejection of the deal.

There was no chance of a sell-out. Free from the state unions, the strike committees were just committees of strikers. They had no interests that were different from the workers as a whole in each factory.

The free trade union movement was not an agent in the organisation and spreading of the mass strike movement. The demand for free trade unions seems to have appeared first of all during the general strike in Lublin in mid-July. It came alongside the clear reply to the attack on workers' living and working conditions:

- wage rises now,
- police out of the factories

The lying claims of unions on the question of organisation are not new. Nor is the workers' response of the Mass Strike:

"The attitude of many trade union leaders to this question is generally summed up in the assertion: 'We are not yet strong enough to risk such a hazardous trial of strength as a mass strike.....'"

Rosa Luxemburg, commenting on the 1905 Russian Revolution in The Mass Strike, 1906.

The truth is different from what the unions say. Organisation, whether it's mass meetings or strike committees, inter-factory committees or workers' councils, follows strike action.

On the 20th August 1980 Russia started to jam radio broadcasts from outside. This was the first jamming for seven years.



Through their own actions, organised by themselves alone, hundreds of thousands of workers at a time went on strike. They won significant pay rises. They made the Polish state tremble.

They gave the lie to the claims of unions everywhere that workers must hold back from strike action until they have built a strong organisation.

They gave the lie to the 'softly, softly' approach of Solidarity later on, warning the workers of their weaknesses and of the state's strength. Where was the threat of Russian invasion in July, 1980?

Outside Poland little news was spread about the mass movement that led to Gdańsk in August. Across an entire country workers refused to accept the logic of capitalist crisis and become poorer. The ruling class has tried to keep us all in ignorance. They've tried to convince us that Poland was just about free trade unions and Solidarity.

Without the strikes of July 1980 there could have been no pay rises, and no MKS in August.

All these gains for the struggle of the workers came before Solidarity took control for the ruling class at the end of August.

(b) Gdansk and the MKS

The MKS was the most highly organised expression of the Polish mass strike. It was also the organ through which the free trade unions came to take power over the working class.

At one and the same time, the MKS put into practice all the lessons learned during the previous seven weeks, and brought forward all the weaknesses of the movement. It was the highest moment in the strike, and the end of the mass strike.

Any working class organ built inside capitalist society is bound to be marked by deep contradictions. An analysis is necessary to draw lessons for future struggles in all countries.

The free trade union movement had an underground organisation long before the July strikes. When workers began to list a call for free unions amongst their strike demands, the state got nervous. It hoped pay rises would buy peace. It knew that if the strikes went on after the pay rises, then the demands would widen.

On 14th August the bosses at the Lenin shipyard in Gdansk tried to nip this danger in the bud. They sacked Anna Walentynowisz, a free trade union militant who was also a highly respected and combative worker.

The workers replied at once. They struck and held a mass meeting. Following the example of the earlier strikes they elected a strike committee to take their demands to the bosses.

They had eleven demands. Most important were:

- reinstatement of sacked workers
- 2000 zloty a month pay rises (between 40 and 67%)
- an end to police and bureaucratic privileges
- an end to the official unions.

The bosses had to make concessions at once. Sacked workers were reinstated.

But this was not enough. When the strike committee reported back the workers were encouraged by their own strength. The mass meeting determined to press on to win all the demands. A workers' militia was formed to defend the yards and loudspeakers were rigged up to relay all the negotiations to all the strikers.

This meant that the mass meeting of all the strikers was in real control of the negotiations. There was no way the strike committee could pull the wool over the workers' eyes. There was no possibility of a sell-out.

The bosses were effectively negotiating with all the workers. They were clearly over a barrel. The pay rises were granted. All the workers sacked since the strikes of 1970 were let back into the yards.

The success of the Lenin yard was the high point of seven weeks of mass strikes. It was a spur to renewed activity by even more workers.

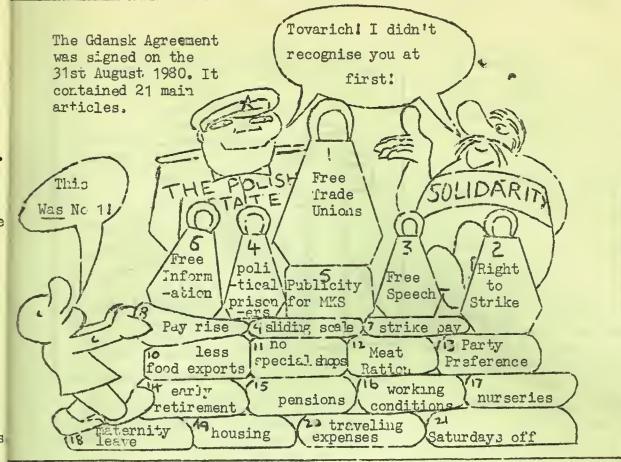
The whole Gdansk region went on strike. Over the next two weeks up to 300 factories were on strike at any one time. Workers in Gdynia who had won their own demands stayed out till Gdansk won. This solidarity spread throughout Poland.

The spirit and action of this workers' solidarity found an organisational expression in the MKS, the inter-factory strike committee. As ever in a workers' struggle, the action came first and determined the need and form of organisation.

This climax of the mass strike was an attempt by workers to overcome the problem caused by the state in settling strikes on a factory-by-factory basis. It was a step towards demanding that the Polish state negotiate directly with the whole working class. The MKS form of organisation was tried in other regions as well as Gdansk.

But the MKS was also the limit of the movement. Over the previous seven weeks of strikes, workers had found out how to use mass meetings to control their

The Gdansk Agreement was signed on the 31st August 1980. It contained 21 main articles.



strike committees. The fruits of this experience were seen in the strike of 14th August in Gdansk. The workers had also seen the need to stop the state from picking them off factory-by-factory, and built MKS to cope with it.

But the MKS was a new and untried form of organisation for the Polish workers. While it answered real needs and was a great step forward, it presented new problems. The Polish experience of the MKS was too short to answer many questions. We can only try to see what the problems were in order to be alert to them when the struggle reaches this stage again.

There were now several levels to the organisation of the strikes. In the factory there were mass meetings which controlled the factory strike committee.

This strike committee sent delegates to the MKS. These delegates reported back twice daily to their own strike committees and mass meetings. So far, the workers were able to exercise strong control over the activities of the MKS.

But the functioning of the MKS was made difficult by the constant coming and going of delegates. In the Gdansk region MKS had to organise food and power supplies and other essential services for the workers now that the general strike had paralysed the normal way the state works in such areas. A permanent body was found to be necessary. The MKS elected a Praesidium.

The Praesidium was dominated by free trade unionists. It was keen to call in experts from among the ranks of the dissidents to advise it on this or that matter of policy. Under this influence the MKS brought forward 21 demands to replace the original eleven demands of the 14th August.

By the 16th August several changes could be noted in these demands. Most notable were:

- the demand for free trade unions had gone up to the No.1 spot;
- the demand for the 2000 zlotya month pay rise had gone down to the No.7 spot.

From this time, the problem the workers had in controlling their own strike, and in particular the Praesidium of the MKS,

became a growing strength for the Polish state. The fact that the Polish state took a long time to recognise it held a trump card in the free trade unions, doesn't alter this view.

The workers' weaknesses in controlling the strike and the negotiations became the growing strength of Solidarity.

Despite the weakening at the organisational level, the strike movement still went forward, and even at this early stage, before the Gdansk Agreement was signed, Lech Walesa was showing his true colours as an ally of the Polish state. He opposed the spreading of the strikes because

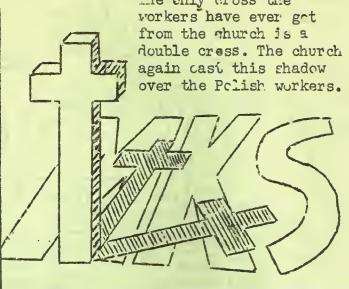
"..we need calm to conduct the negotiations."

As usual the trade unionist, 'free' or otherwise, has the wrong end of the stick. The negotiations in Gdansk were most successful when the workers were able to intervene directly and dictate the course. That's when sacked workers were reinstated and when the biggest pay rises were won. The greater the calm that prevails, the worse it has been for the workers.

The Praesidium of the MKS began a course that opposed the workers from the outset, and the workers were unable to stop it. Quite simply, the working class learns from its own experience. The workers in Poland didn't know of that experience until the MKS in Gdansk.

There was a gradual return to private negotiations after the 16th August mass meetings turned down the MKS recommendations. Loudspeakers began to break down, or to be used for patriotic or church propaganda.

Another good idea of the Praesidium -



By the end of August, control of the negotiations had slipped away from the workers and was in the hands of the Praesidium.

The Gdansk Agreement, with its compromises over the leading role of the party, and its backsliding over pay rises, is the result.

So too is the new trade union, Solidarity. As Poland went back to work at the beginning of September, 1980, fifteen members of the Praesidium of MKS became fulltime officials of Solidarity.

The workers were no longer at the centre of the stage as they had been since the beginning of July. Solidarity and the state now began their manoeuvres to find the best way to win back from the workers the concessions which had been won.

The lessons of the mass strikes are simple and clear:

WHEN WORKERS CONTROL THEIR OWN STRIKES AND NEGOTIATIONS, THEY HAVE GREAT STRENGTH. WHEN THEY DON'T, THE RULING CLASS USES EACH FAILURE AGAINST THEM.

PHASE TWO: SEPTEMBER 1980 to NOW  
SOLIDARITY AND THE ROAD FROM  
GDANSK

Not all the workers were wild about the Gdansk Agreement of 31st August. The free trade unionists weren't as active in Gdynia and the workers there didn't at first believe that Gdansk had settled on this basis. Despite the news of the Agreement the Silesian miners stayed out until it was clear that Gdansk had gone back.

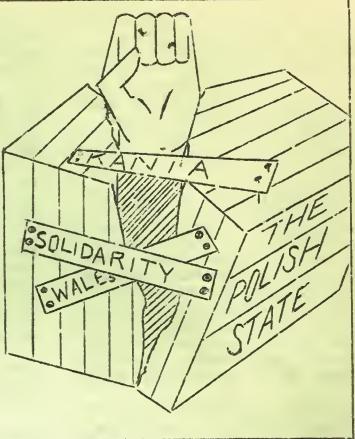
Although the workers had lost control of the negotiations in the end, they were still militant after August 31st. When the government went slow on the Agreement, the workers pressed for it.

Solidarity got the workers to trust in it and believe it was sincere. And this was no hardship for Solidarity - because what it called the gains of Gdansk were its own passport to power in the Polish state.

Unlike 1970 it was no longer enough for the Polish state to appoint a new boss. It did that as well - on September 5th Gierek went and the liberal Kania came - but it also took Solidarity to its bosom. Solidarity, and the KOR dissidents who envied the unions of the West, stressed the weakness of the national economy.

Like their allies the church, they preached the need to rebuild the economy - and tighten belts for the present. Paradise was tomorrow. They appealed for a patriotic effort to stay calm in the face of Russian threats to invade.

Solidarity's grown fat on the lie that the workers' strikes gave it birth. It's pointed out how different it is from the state unions of old. The Polish workers have listened to this lie. To swallow it means to also swallow the rationalism and the breaking



of future strikes by the Polish workers. Solidarity's done what every other union's done in this situation - TGWU, AUEW, the French unions, the Italian unions. It's choked the militant workers inch by inch. Instead of the workers spreading strikes and organising them, now Solidarity is kind enough to do it for them. So the result is the 1-hour strike, the one company strike, the single shop strike - and finally, when the workers are almost ground under its heel, the militant strike threat that's withdrawn.

What is the result of all this? Who gained at Gdansk - and what?

Solidarity has been officially recognised by the Polish state. It's got nearly 10 million members and makes up one third of the Polish Communist Party. It's got peasant farmers mixed in with the workers. It now sits on the government's right hand - and it's the government's joker to solve the problem of the foreign debts.

The Gdansk Agreement abolished Saturday working. Solidarity's agreed that Saturday working's now OK as long as it's only one Saturday a month.

Workers got the right to strike after Gdansk - this when they were on strike and dictating terms. In July and August, 1980, when strikes were illegal, hundreds of thousands of workers were on strike almost every day. Now that Solidarity is the custodian of this right to strike there's been no significant strikes at all.

Meat, butter, sugar, rice and flour is now rationed out to the Polish workers. Wages are up 20% - but there's nothing to buy as usual - and the state's about to take back the wage rises by cutting back the food subsidies. The difference today is that Solidarity is saying it might be in the national interest - and therefore the patriotic duty of every Polish worker. Two million workers are to be put on the dole.

Solidarity said it would defend the workers against state repression. What happened when the workers held a meeting in a government building and the police beat them up? Solidarity gave its ritual strike threat, and then took it back and told workers not to occupy government buildings.

The final goal of the working class is a world revolution to create communism. Anything which stops short of that ends with a compromise - and then a counter-attack by the state.

In Gdansk the mass strike movement reached its limits. The workers in Poland have got to find out how to control all the strike organs that go beyond a single factory. They didn't find out how in time - so the Gdansk Agreement was the compromise. Solidarity was the counter-attack by the state.

Solidarity used the position it won through the MKS Praesidium to help the rest of the state turn the screw even harder on the workers.

All the wage rises, the stops on price rises, and the momentary respite in capitalism's plans to make the workers poorer, are being taken away.

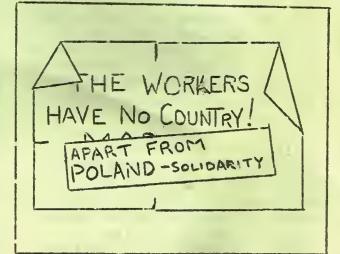
The lesson for the working class - the enduring gain of Gdansk - is clear. All unions, whatever their name - free, new, radical - however they are created - in the last century, in this century, by the state, or in the middle of a strike when they seem to be the product of class struggle - all unions act at all times as part of the ruling class and its state. Unions are, without exception, the enemies of the working class. They are used everywhere by the ruling class as a policemen amongst the workers, and as a fire brigade to put out the strikes.

What the workers won at Gdansk was not new legal rights - or even, in the end, pay rises that were of lasting value.

What the workers won at Gdansk were the lessons of a new wave of mass strikes.

In July and August the workers won a lesson on organisation and on solidarity amongst workers. They learned something new when they went ahead and created the MKS, even with its problems still unresolved by that struggle.

These are the gains of Gdansk, the gains that will carry the workers even farther forward in the next wave of mass strikes, wherever they occur. And amongst these gains is: NEVER PUT FAITH IN ANY NEW UNION.



THE RULING CLASS LOOKS ON....

The ruling class hasn't a clue about the real danger it's in from the workers. Mass strikes like Poland in 1980 are part of the upswing towards a world revolution that will destroy the ruling class utterly. But the bosses can't comprehend a society without them.

They see the difficulty in getting the workers to put up with starvation wages, with getting the workers to work harder, and with the reluctance of the workers to die in capitalist wars.

But when the workers protest at a level that threatens to seriously upset the bosses' plans - all the bosses can see is chaos. Yet they're always on the lookout for some new group of bosses who will use that chaos to take their place.

That's mainly what the bosses in Poland saw in the strikes of July and August, 1980. That's why Solidarity at first got the cold shoulder from the rest of the Polish state - and why Russia was so alarmed. The cold shoulder made Solidarity look as though it was against capitalism and for the

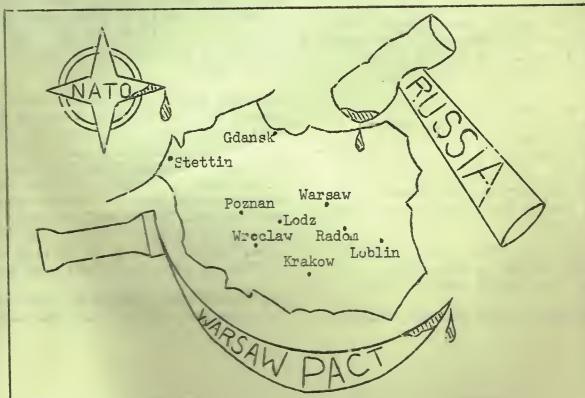
workers - when all it was doing was fighting for capitalism in its own way.

You can no more put Solidarity on the side of the workers because it was against Gierek's method of exploiting the workers, than you can put Kaiser Bill on their side because he was against King George V's imperialism.

It's the same with nationalism. Russia's afraid that Solidarity's brand of nationalism won't be good for Russia. Russia wants tame nationalists in Poland. At Katyn in 1941 the Russian Army shot 15,000 of this wrong sort of Polish nationalist. It held back and let the German Army crush the Warsaw Rising in order to get rid of 100,000 more of them.

Since 1945 the trouble's been that tame Polish nationalists either turn militant when they see the way that Russia bleeds Poland white, or they (along with Russia) get blamed by the rest of the Polish ruling class as the real exploiters of the working class.

Nationalists of all sorts are merchants of death for the workers. Poland is bled white by Russia - but Russia's simply carting away the blood that the ruling class is anyway going to suck from the workers in Poland.



Poland's industry is tied in to what Russia wants. Russia has insisted on that since 1945, so most of Poland's exports are sent to Russia each year:

- 45% machines and equipment,
- 75% oiling stock,
- 38% ships,
- 67% textiles,
- 50% footwear.

Poland supplies basic, cheap, goods for the Russian economy - and Russia needs it all.

If Poland didn't keep up these cheap supplies and didn't buy back dear Russian goods, then Russia couldn't afford the weapons and troops it has now - let alone increase them.

One eighth of the Russian economy is devoted to war. There's no way it can back-track on this. What happens if Poland stops feeding the Russian economy ?

Russia must use its armies now, in order to keep its armies in the future - Russia invades Poland. War is the only future for capitalism - East and West.

At the end of 1980, Russia, East Germany and Czechoslovakia first made sure that the strikes didn't cross the Polish frontier. Russian troop commanders in Poland kept the soldiers in barracks. On 20th August 1980, for the first time in seven years, Russia jammed radio broadcasts. 2,500 stations started to jam any news that was coming in from west of Russia.

Where are the Russian armies? 30 divisions deployed in Eastern Europe to wait for World War III are still where they were. Russia still has nearly 40 divisions waiting for war on the border with China. It's still got 10 divisions pinning down Afghanistan.

None of these armies can be moved without risking an even bigger danger than Poland was in 1980.

The armies of East Germany, Bulgaria,

Roumania, Hungary and Czechoslovakia are together less than half the size of the Russian army. But most of these armies are holding strong points in their own countries - or sitting back to back or joint borders to stop any rebellion crossing those frontiers.

The danger changed in September 1980. Solidarity appeared out of nowhere, and Russia recognised its leaders for what they were - a capitalist group on the make, and potentially able to break-off all the good deals by which Russia siphoned away most of the profits from Polish capitalism.

By early 1981, the ruling class in Russia and the rest of the Warsaw Pact countries were sure that the Polish strikes weren't going to join up with strikes at home. They began to move troops up to the Polish border. The mobilisation was completed in April 1981.

The Western countries weren't any more aware than Russia that the mass strikes of July and August were a step towards revolution by workers everywhere. They feared most that Poland would Welch on its debts - and they also have armies to keep up.

Just as Russia feared the new nationalism when Solidarity appeared, the ruling class in the West welcomed Solidarity. It meant something to the ruling class in the West as well: in Paris on 27th April 1981 the USA, Canada, Britain and six other countries decided to forget most of the Polish debts until 1986.

Why this sudden pity for Poland? It wasn't any sort of pity - they'd made a deal with Kania and Solidarity. Each western government was sent a document by the new Poland. Kania laid out how the debts could be repaid - and Solidarity was the assurance that the workers could be made to pay. It's a deal to keep capitalism going in Poland - and everywhere else. The USA will go on selling £400 million of goods to Poland each year.

The British TUC planned to visit Poland in September, 1980. During the mass stri

of July and August it had second thoughts. But when Solidarity came out on top, and the dissidents of KOR showed up strongly, the TUC changed its mind again. The TUC had now seen something it understood and approved of. The September TUC Congress in Brighton welcomed the free trade unions as brothers.

The French CFDT sent a delegation to Gdańsk. The Italian unions and the American AFL-CIO sent money.

What were these unions trying to do in September and October 1980? The unions are in it for what they can get out of it. They weren't helping the Polish workers - and they didn't help Solidarity very much to cripple the strikes. They looked for the pay-off at home: in Britain, in France, in Italy, in America.

This is what it's all about. Solidarity is a strong part of the Polish state because it took over the organisations which the workers made in the mass strike. Solidarity looks just like the TUC or the CFDT - so the TUC and the CFDT also take credit for the Polish strikes.

If the Polish people trust in Solidarity, then the people in Britain and France should have as much trust in the TUC and the CFDT - that's how the lie runs.

There is just one working class in the world - and it doesn't matter if the workers happen to be in one country or another. They all have the same interests. The lessons of the mass strike in Poland are not just lessons for the workers in Poland - they're lessons for the workers in Britain, in France, and every worker in the world.

But the failures in the Polish mass strike don't just affect the workers in Poland either. The consequences of any failure are felt by every worker in the world as well - in Britain, in France, in America.

The Polish workers weren't able to control the Presidium of the MKS and the negotiations. They didn't see the danger of Solidarity. It's now costing blood and misery in Warsaw and Łódź - and the same at Dagenham, Detroit and Gdańsk.

The unions everywhere have got stronger because of what Solidarity did to the workers in Poland. The Socialist CFDT got the first big union delegation into Gdańsk. In May and June 1981 they also got French workers to vote in the first Socialist government since 1945. This is the pay-off.

#### WHAT IS TO BE DONE?

There were mass strikes in Poland in 1956, 1970 and 1976. Each time the state fooled the workers in the end. But each time the workers again raised the mass strike. Each time the workers took the mass strike further.

In 1980 the state fooled the workers with Kania and Solidarity. When the mass strike comes again, the Polish state alone won't be able to hold it back.

The only way forward is for the workers in Poland to again take the path of struggle - like they did in July 1980. They must ignore Solidarity, as last year they ignored the state unions. They must again form their mass meetings and strike committees, and build a mass movement which is totally and completely under their own control. This is the way to hold back the wage cuts for a while - and to build a revolution which will never fail them.

Every union in the world is leaning on Solidarity's false reputation for representing the interests of the workers.



Luxemburg said we face the question, "WAR OR REVOLUTION?"

# NEWS OF WAR AND REVOLUTION

## WE ARE AGAINST

CLASS SOCIETY - workers are exploited as long as class society continues.

CAPITALISM, EAST & WEST - Russia, Cuba, China, Yugoslavia, Albania and all the police states are as capitalist as Britain and the USA.

THE WAGES SYSTEM - the bosses and the state pay workers less than the value of the goods they make.

THE OPPRESSION THAT IS PART OF CAPITALIST SOCIETY

SOCIALISM IN ONE COUNTRY - workers cannot make communism while capitalism survives anywhere on earth.

NATIONALISM - the workers have no country.

WAR - wars have killed millions of workers this century.

PARLIAMENT & ELECTIONS - no capitalist state, nor any change in it, can help the workers at all.

LEFT & RIGHT PARTIES - Tories, Liberals, Labour, SDP, CP, NF, Trotskyists and Macists - all serve the ruling class.

UNIONS - the unions are dead, and no new unions can be made to serve the workers. All unions serve the ruling class.

SELF-GOVERNMENT BY PROLETARIAT - workers can't run industry in their own interests in a capitalist society.

COMMUNISTS ORGANISING WORKERS AND TAKING POWER FOR THEM - only the whole working class can build communism.

## WE ARE FOR

WORKERS DEFENDING THEIR LIVING STANDARDS  
Unions and capitalist parties defend the bosses' profits, cut workers' wages, and raise prices and productivity. The workers have no interest in this.

WORKERS ORGANISING THEIR OWN STRIKES  
Shop stewards and union officials look after their own interests and those of capitalism. Workers alone must decide about their strikes in mass meetings. They must carry out their decisions through delegates elected and controlled by the same mass meetings.

WORKERS SPREADING THEIR OWN STRIKES  
Unions which offer to spread strikes are setting a trap to limit them. Workers must spread strikes by their own flying pickets and delegations.

WORKERS STRUGGLING AGAINST THE STATE  
Struggles must link up across industries, working class communities and countries, and attack all parts of the state.

WORKERS MAKING THEIR OWN REVOLUTION  
No party can do this. Only workers can organise and control the workers' councils which will destroy capitalism.

REVOLUTION ON A WORLD SCALE  
The Russian revolution was lost when it failed to spread to other countries.

WORKERS ORGANISING SOCIETY  
The class which produces the goods is the only class which can bring communism.

COMMUNISM  
A SOCIETY of production for human needs, with no classes, no wages system, no oppression and no frontiers.

**COMMUNISTS MUST SPEAK OUT ON ALL THESE QUESTIONS!**

JANUARY 1982

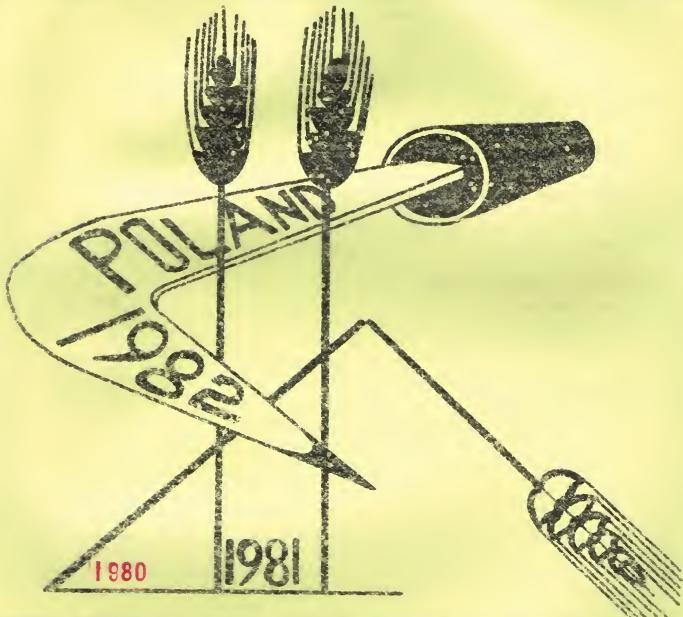
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Luxemburg said we face the question "WAR OR REVOLUTION?"

# NEWS

NEWS OF WAR  
AND REVOLUTION

ISSUE № 4



Mass strikes got pay rises and price cuts for the Polish workers in 1980. In 1981 the workers let Solidarity take charge. What did Solidarity do? It took over the links between the workers. Solidarity committees took the decisions. Strikes were turned on and off to suit Solidarity. What did Solidarity get the Polish workers? Pay rises were stopped. Prices went up. The workers were divided by region and plant. They were sent home to watch Walesa on TV. They were helpless when the troops came onto the streets and stormed into the factories.

UNIONS EVERYWHERE SOW THE SEEDS OF DEFEAT - AND GOVERNMENTS REAP THAT HARVEST !

NEWS OF WAR AND REVOLUTION NO.4

This issue of NEWS OF WAR AND REVOLUTION has some of the letters we've received and some of our replies. We couldn't get them all into this issue, so we're sorry if you have to wait.

NEWS-5 should be out in February. It will be a pamphlet specially devoted to BL.

This issue contains a leaflet for general distribution: Capitalism in 1982: War and Want. If you want copies, write to us.

Contact NEWS by writing to:

NEWS, c/o 70, High Street, Leicester, Great Britain.

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# POLAND

Since mid-December the news from Poland has been the worst. Resistance to martial law is being relentlessly crushed by a well-planned military operation.

Workers have been killed for striking or occupying their factories. Miners have been gassed and drowned in the pits.

Families have gone without food and without news of friends and relatives in other parts of the country. The ruling class has imposed mass terror across the whole country, with a warning to workers in other parts of the Eastern Bloc. Strikers in Rumania and the rest of the Russian Empire know their fate if they defy the authorities.

Western capitalists have taken another opportunity to condemn the Eastern capitalists. They have tried to play the role of friend to the downtrodden masses of Poland.

They are no friends of the Polish workers! Any more than they are friends of the workers in the West. What Russia and

Jaruzelski have done in Poland, the USA has done in different ways - when Reagan sacked the striking air traffic controllers and took away their living; when the USA ran the corrupt regime in South Vietnam; when the Allies starved German workers during the occupation of Germany in 1945; Britain and the rest would not hesitate to do the same - Britain has plenty of experience from the Empire and in Ireland in putting down workers who refuse to stop up production for starvation wages.

The problem in Poland for the capitalists has been getting more production to meet the insatiable demands of Russia - and the Western banks who want their loans repaid. In the end, the army is the last resort of the capitalists. It must get workers to work at gunpoint if they won't work any other way.

Less than 10 years ago these same capitalists in the East were the first to condemn the military coup in Chile. They said they were against Pinochet's methods of militarised labour. Now they show how well they've learnt the lesson. They are true sons to Stalin!

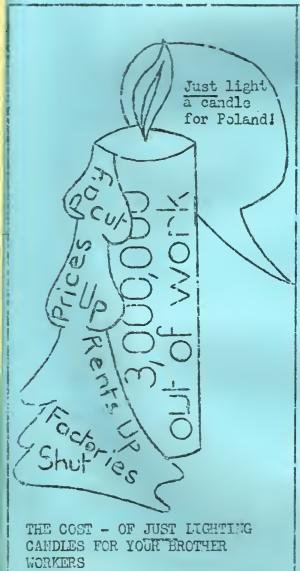
It is clear. The Western governments can't help the working class in Poland. They try to get the workers in the West to make just the same sacrifices as the Polish workers have tried to resist for a year and a half.

The plea of the Polish capitalists for an end to strikes is just the same as the plea to end strikes in Britain and the West. East and West, the workers face the same ruling class of capitalism.

Many people want us to think that mass strikes - like those in Poland in July and August 1980 - always end up with mass terror and army rule. This is rubbish! The mass strike is our weapon against the capitalists. They are the only means of defence which we have against the state's attack on wages and living standards.

The working class makes new forms of organisation in a mass strike. The mass strike calls out for this. The unions can't be used by the workers. The unions simply represent the state and make deals which suit the state. This was the way with the mass strikes in Poland.

When Polish workers began to build inter-factory strike committees they were acting on this necessity to create their own organisations.



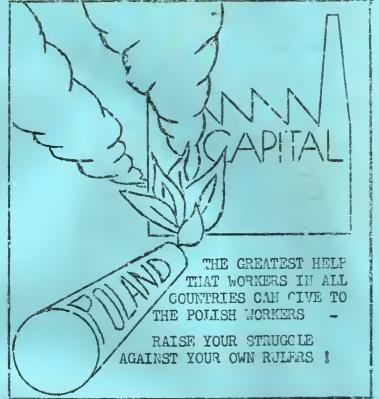
The problem that faced both the workers and the state in July and August 1980 was that the old unions had been swept aside. They had no role to play. The workers had formed the inter-factory committees to direct their struggle. But neither side knew what the objectives of that struggle were.

The state gave in on certain demands - it had no choice because without its own unions it had no means of enforcing its wishes. The workers grabbed these victories - and a new illusion. This was the idea of a new trade union to defend the victory. The workers didn't see the danger in giving over their struggle to the control of Solidarity. They didn't see that nobody but themselves could defend their victory. How could they? The workers in Poland had never seen anything like Solidarity. They'd no experience of radical unions. They fell for the lie that to be against the present government means the same as being on the workers' side.

A communist wrote from Italy to say to us:

"The workers failed to control their representatives and so they became bureaucrats. The problem wasn't the sort of organisation that the workers made - the German councils in 1918 degenerated as well. The workers allowed central committees to be created because they were willing to accept centralised authority. Nor was it because the workers couldn't control it when the time came. Control can be got back. The only reason for all this was the natural fall in the struggle - at any moment the workers get the representatives they deserve. Until we go beyond capitalism, we'll always get those alternate phases in the struggle." TG

But from then onwards the struggle went backwards. Instead of taking part in mass strikes, the workers waited for Solidarity to order strikes. Not that Solidarity found it easy to curb the workers' militancy. Strikes broke out in 1981 - but Solidarity got them under its wing after a day or so - just like Western unions dealing with scabs.



Throughout 1981 the Russians threatened - and Walesa and Solidarity warned just like Jaruzelski and the Polish CP. The workers were told to give up the strikes that threatened invasion - and back instead Solidarity's negotiations with the Polish government. Solidarity said "stay calm and work normally". In fact do the exact opposite of what brought the workers to a victory in July and August, 1980!

Poland shows you that unions are useless - but it also shows you that they are dangerous to the working class. For a year Solidarity did its best to turn workers away from the weapon that alone took them forward - the mass strike. It was the army that stormed the factories in the end - but it was Solidarity who took away the only weapon the workers had.

Workers everywhere must guard against the new lie that is being told about Poland! The struggle today in Poland is NOT a struggle to rebuild Solidarity! The unions in the West are already putting this lie about - and no wonder. They want you to support them as the price of their efforts to help save Solidarity in Poland.

No help for Solidarity is any use to the workers in Poland. It only helps to strengthen the union that lead them to defeat - it only binds you to the same path. The only way workers can help the workers in Poland is to wage war against their own bosses, their own unions, their own state.

## The fight at BL is not over

The settlement of the Longbridge tea-break dispute ended another round in the battle between workers and bosses at BL. The workers were threatened with a bleak Christmas if they didn't get a few weeks on full pay. The management swapped a few concessions on the day shift for extra work at night, and got them back to work. The unions helped the bosses out of a spot of bother by sowing a new division amongst the workers: day shift versus night shift.

The unions had already sold out the pay strike in November. They said there was some money - and nothing more could be got. Kitson and Cowley went on TV to get the workers to throw in the sponge, Edwards said he'd be nicer, and Tory MPs talked about selling off bits of BL that made money.

It was all talk. It didn't calm the workers but it swung the pay vote the bosses way. The trick was to keep the arguments within the framework of BL alone. The only issues put before the workers were BL's future, BL's ability to pay, BL's capacity to provide jobs. You'd have thought the British State had nothing to do with what was going on at BL.

There is no way forward when workers put up with wearing blinkers like this. What was needed at the start of the pay dispute was to throw them off - and to throw off the crew that tell these lies: bosses, unions, and the rest of the state.

The mass pickets showed the unity and strength of workers at the plants. There's a law against pickets like these - but apart from a few scraps at Cowley, the police didn't stop them. Why? Because the poison was already at work. The unions beat the strike by using the solidarity as support for the union negotiations with Edwards. They made it so that they could claim that BL couldn't afford more - that the threat of a massive strike could only get a few worthless concessions from Edwards.

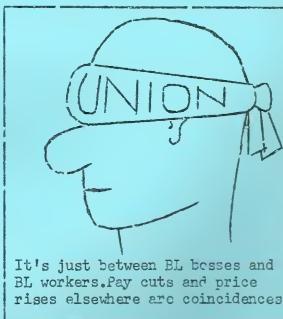
The unions sold out the strike before it started. They peddled the lie that even a strike couldn't get more money out of BL. They wanted you to think that a British state that can spend £10,000,000,000 on new missiles is hard up.

One hour after the return to work the Acclaim line at Cowley was stopped for a day and a half. A car fell from a hoist and injured a worker. What was the management reaction? Did we see the new style that Edwards promised? Like Hell!

The worker lay there injured waiting for the ambulance - and the workers were told to get back to work in 15 minutes or lose their jobs. It's nothing to the bosses if workers get injured. The workers struck - and they didn't go back until they'd got new safety precautions on the Acclaim line.

While this was going on at Cowley, Edwards was manoeuvring to cut the teabreaks at Longbridge. This was the second cut in a year. It was part of the 39-hour week agreement that the unions negotiated. The unions said there was going to be cuts in the working week - but it was just lies as usual. The clause about no loss in production meant the bosses were going to get more work in less time. As a start they were going to cut out time during the shift in return for giving some of it back when the shift was over. Big deal!

The workers knew what to do at Longbridge, just as they did at Cowley. To strike at once and no waiting for the union. But it didn't take long for the unions to come to BL's rescue. Did they call out all BL? Did they link the two-handed shuffle at Longbridge over teabreaks with the expectation that the same type of thing would happen at Cowley and the other plants? Not a bit of it!



## Leyland Action №3

(The new procedural agreement)...Its most dangerous proposals are as follows:

1. A Joint Works Committee structure which would be the final stage of procedure in each plant.
2. A new JMU which would consist almost entirely of full-time officials and would be entirely appointed by the General Executives of the 11 unions. No one inside BL will have any control over the negotiates for them.
3. A new discipline procedure which gives plant management the right of summary dismissal in the event of what they define as gross industrial misconduct.
4. It makes the new disputes procedure part of each individual's contract of employment - which implies that anyone in breach of procedure is automatically sacked.

The unions sat on their hands and waited for BL to lay-off. They picked up what the Tory MPs were saying and gave it big publicity - BL was in danger of being broken up and sold off piecemeal. They kept up the idea that had let them break the pay strike - then it was just a matter between BL bosses and BL workers. Now it was just a Longbridge thing. Every reporter and TV crew in the country got itself to Birmingham so they could send back news - so they could send back the answer to the questions they asked the workers "How will you manage when BL shuts and you never work again?" The whole team worked together - TV, press, bosses, MFs, government, Kitson, Cure, TGWU and AUEW - to swing the vote against the strike. And they got what they wanted - Longbridge went back. They turned the day shift against the night shift in order to pull off the return to work.

In 1982 the workers will go on with the battle at BL. Slipped in the pay deal was a no-strike clause. It doesn't say that straight out of course.

The new procedure proposes that nobody in BL will have a say in what deals are cooked up between the bosses and the unions. It makes the new procedure an iron law - it's the sack if you don't follow the new procedure. And so they can bring in the law - and turn round to public opinion and say "It's not us that's breaking an agreement" - it's being put into the contract of every worker.

It all boils down to this. Edwardes has the really big job of persuading Kitson and Cure about anything he wants to do. When he's got that rubber stamp - any worker who objects can be sacked with the blessing of the unions. We already know what Kitson and Cure think about strikes at BL. So it all boils down to a no-strike agreement.

The Leyland Action Committee pointed this out clearly in their bulletin - but the answer to this isn't a reform of the union so there's somebody sympathetic to the BL workers amongst the full timers in the union. That's the way the unions and the

bosses would like to sidetrack the militancy at BL - into a dead-end campaign to get militant talkers elected to union offices. This has never worked to help the workers.

The only answer to the deal cooked up by the bosses and the unions is the strike weapon. The strike has got to be used against the unions as well as the bosses. Would you let Edwardes run the strikes at BL? Well, if the unions are let in on the strikes it comes to much the same thing. Can anybody think that Kitson, Cure and their crew are on the workers side now? Edwardes will just be listening to his own echo when he negotiates with the new JNC.

The workers at BL can't give over their negotiations to this Edwardes Fan Club. It doesn't represent them - and it's just a bosses tea party.

The only way the workers can negotiate for themselves at BL is through the mass meetings. All the union structures have got to be lumped in with part of Personnel Management at BL - they're no real use. They can never be made useful

# STAFFA STRIKE

In the 29th September 390 workers employed by Staffa Products in Leyton East London occupied their factory in an attempt to save their jobs. The management of this US based engineering concern wanted to move the factory to Plymouth to take advantage of government grants (worth 24 million) and tax concessions. They also wanted to take advantage of lower wage rates in Plymouth (12% compared to London) and shed 100 jobs.

At 5 am on the 15th October, when there were only 17 strikers inside the factory, 100 police suddenly swarmed over the walls. They evicted the occupation force and removed stocks of hydraulic motors. After this the strikers put up a 24 hour picket and started to go up and down the country in an attempt to get a total black on the Staffa products.

The unions tried to ignore the strike. It took the AUEW 6 weeks to make the strike official. Throughout the dispute the AUEW lied to hinder the strikers on a national level. And on a local level the union's District President, George Anthony, a CP member, did nothing to help the strike.

Despite all this, the strikers attempts to win support and get the black on was now beginning to hurt the company. Enough for the management to step in with an improved deal, by today's standards, quite generous deal, by today's standards, quite generous after which guaranteed 6 months work and £1000 or 6 months wages on top of the statutory redundancy money. All this to be worked out on a 7% pay rise - more than Indify had negotiated for the rest of the industry.



On 1st December, after the strike had been going on for 10 weeks, a mass meeting of the Staffa workforce voted overwhelmingly to accept the company's offer (by 220 to 31). Although the workforce had got a few extra quid from the management, by voting to return they have given up their fight to save their jobs.

The consequence of this defeat goes beyond Staffa to the whole working class. This was a fight against unemployment and today that increasingly means a fight by the whole working class to survive. So why was the fight at Staffa lost? What stopped it and how could it have been won?

## UNEMPLOYMENT STOPS HERE - Staffa collection sheet.

This capitalist system we survive under today is in a mess. Everything that had been taken for granted is collapsing. Faced with this, capitalism can only attack the working class and the dispossessed in an attempt to save itself. It does this by austerity, unemployment and eventually by leading the working class off to war. Because capitalism spreads over the whole face of the earth, the fight against it must do likewise. There is no place anymore for workers in one factory here, or one town there, to look after themselves alone. Fight for one and fight for all. This is the only way to win today.

Every struggle that breaks out today must reach out to the whole working class. It must go beyond the divisions that capitalism has sown amongst us. It must go from workplace to workplace, town to town, and country to country. Across local and national divisions. Across trade divisions. Across the divisions that all politicians, both left and right, try to enforce. It must go beyond the bounds that the unions try to contain the working class in.

This means going beyond the false solidarity that leaves workers isolated from each other. This means uniting strikes with each other. Spreading strikes. Fighting on a basis that can link all workers together.

So what went wrong at Staffa? How come the struggle suddenly ends after 10 weeks? Why such an overwhelming majority in favour of a return to work under the company's conditions? A return that means that they will only put off getting booted down the road for another 6 months.

It's true that many of the Staffa workers did not want to fight in the first place.

It's true that lots of those who did became demoralised after a while. And this was because the struggle didn't seem to be getting anywhere. And the struggle didn't get anywhere because it was strangled at every turn by the left and the unions. Around every corner there was a representative of the labour movement ready to lead the labourers up another blind alley.

As it was the struggle at Staffa was hard enough. The workforce faced a sophisticated US company that had the full backing of the government and was quite prepared to take the whole concern out of the country. The strikers also faced the full strength of the state as the police raid so amply demonstrated. And when they turned to the union they got sweet fuck all.

Duffy & Co. tried to ignore the strike for 6 weeks. When they reluctantly made it official they didn't even come across with all the strike pay. Today the most the Staffa workers have received is 5 weeks. As the delegations went across the country they were obstructed by local union officers.

Let's face it, if the AUEW had wanted, it could have tied up the company in a couple of weeks. All Staffa products could have been blacked, especially in the mines and the docks where they were needed most. The unions didn't tie up Staffa because they didn't want to. It's not their job. The Duffy's of this world are there to ensure the policing of the shop floor in the interests of national capitalism. That's what they're about.

If further proof is needed, just ask where King Arthur was. Just ask why Staffa pumps weren't blacked in the mines-not even in Yorkshire.

And what of the Labour Party? Or at least its left wing that we hear so much of. Soi all, All the LP could produce was 30 MPs to sponsor a resolution calling on the government not to pay the company's £4 million grant for the move to Plymouth. That, and Mr Livingstone offering to match the £4 million if the company stays in London. Any members of the IMG left after the flight into the LP take a bow here for their gallant work in trying to take the Staffa workers away from their fight and make them cannon fodder for the Labour left's internal party fights.

OK. So this much about the unions and the LP is more or less known these days. Not so many illusions left in that bunch of gangsters. The Staffa strike was lost on the ground rather than in the offices.

The stewards who left the strike busted their guts trying to keep the workforce united and the struggle going. But they were tied up by their credentials. As stewards they couldn't break out of the union prison. The struggle was fought on traditional lines. The call went out for a total black on Staffa products. The idea began to force the company to forget its move to Plymouth. The stewards worked hard through all the obstacles put in their way to make the black work.

But this is not enough, because to limit the fight to blacking and strike fund collections is to keep the strike isolated from the rest of the working class. More is needed. There is absolutely fuck all in the way of permanent gain: one workforce on its own can win today. The crisis is a crisis of the whole system. It's not just a factory here, or an area there, that's going down, but the whole show. We are moving towards Poland-not going back to "you've never had it so good".) This means that the fight back has got to unite the whole working class. No good asking other workers just to black a product here, another one there, and remain tied to the workbenches. Those in dispute must go to other workers and say "Look, we have started, now come out on strike with us. This is your fight as well."

Staffa was about unemployment. There's the hook. There's the opening to the rest of the working class. Rather than just call for blacking, the Staffa workers could have gone directly to the LSE workers and united the two struggles. They could have gone to those still in work and said: "Look at us. This is what is in store for you. Join us."

The Staffa workers could have gone to the unemployed directly and involved them in the struggle -got them onto the picket lines for a start. But no, rather than going directly they went via Mr Deason and the Right-to-Work campaign. Another blind ally. The Staffa strike nearly got lost as the stewards began to promote the Right-to-Work campaign. Rather than take the Staffa story to other workers, the Right-to-Work lot took them on publicity stunts to Tebbit's house.

And worse, they took all the leading Staffa militants to Blackpool for a Right-to-Work demo when it was evident that the police were about to make a move to end the occupation. That's why there were only 17 strikers inside the factory when the health came.

We must say it again. Nobody can win on their own anymore. At best an isolated struggle can only soften the blow for a while. Many will reply that it is utopian to try and generalise a strike when you have to really work up a sweat just to get a collection going. But there is no choice today. It is the only way to fight back. The attempt must be made.

Listen, stewards. After the return to work you blamed the apathy of many of the Staffa workers. Perhaps that apathy would have been smashed if the full extent of the struggle was hammered home. If those on strike could have seen that their tactics, no matter how hard to implement, had a chance of getting somewhere, apathy would not have turned out to be the problem it was. The more the strike was taken to the rest of the working class, the stronger the strikers would have been.

No, Mr Labour Movement. It is not us who are utopians, but you. All of you who sow the illusion that jobs can be saved, that it is just the Tories who are to blame; that all we need is a left Labour government. All you who tell the lie that there is something to gain in capitalism today - you are the biggest utopians of the lot.

The implications of the Staffa strike went way beyond the factory gates. Today the LSE workers are still fighting. Just recently, the Lee Jeans workers went back to the joys of a new boss and the same old exploitation. Others will soon face the same problem. These lessons were learnt years ago - remember Fine Tubes? The left and the unions have tried to hide them ever since.

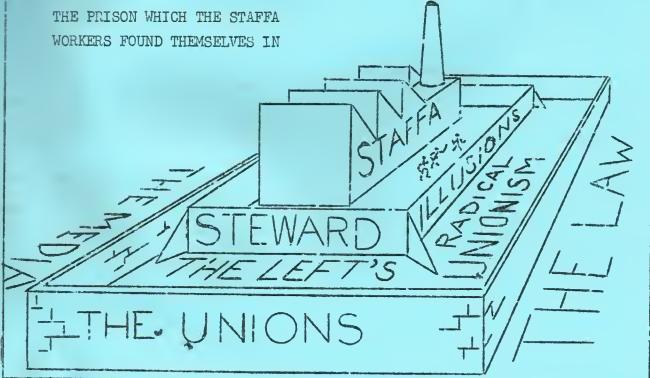
We know every 'small' struggle is not going to lead to the revolution. But the more each 'small' struggle is generalised, the stronger it will be. When negotiations have to take place, let workers go into them with a bit more clout. And when negotiations have to take place, they must be brought out of locked rooms. They must be put before the whole workforce.

Struggles like Staffa give a golden opportunity to unite huge sections of the working class.

The issue, unemployment, was staring everyone in the face. As we said before, today unemployment brings into question the very survival of the working class.

The stakes are getting higher all the time. The fightback must get stronger. Where this means the working class pushing aside all its 'friends' on the left and in the unions, then so be it.

THE PRISON WHICH THE STAFFA WORKERS FOUND THEMSELVES IN



## STRUGGLES IN FRANCE

On the following pages we are printing translations of two leaflets produced for a strike in the shipyards of St Nazaire by the group 'Eveil Internationaliste'.

'Eveil Internationaliste' can be contacted at:  
BP 221, 44 604  
St Nazaire, France.

We have no information on this strike except what appears in these leaflets. We'll print details when we know more. It would seem to have been a small and isolated strike - and the unions bottled it up fairly easily. In this respect it seems like many strikes in Britain at this time.

### OPEN YOUR EYES, COMRADES!

Last week the unions made proposals for the strike. The CGT wants a mass stoppage, but with everyone staying put. The CFDT wants both sectors to stop and then for them to contact the engineers. They've started their action - a 45 minute strike last Thursday! The FO says its against what's happening because it's from only a minority.

These self-styled 'defenders of the workers' are yet again showing their true colours. They don't just go in for the dirty business of smothering strikes at St. Nazaire. They do it everywhere!

Comrades, look at what happened at Renault. In the summer, week after week, there were sectional strikes and 24 hour strikes - and all of it designed to stop the struggle spreading. Then, when the unions thought they'd dragged this out enough, they made a deal to get the workers back. There as well the CGT said that workers who wanted to go on with the struggle were adventurers.

The transport workers who took over the Villeneuve St George control and blocked the airport tried to hold back planes, but the government of 'the left' is there to help out the unions whenever they can't undermine the struggle on their own.

There were scandalous comments on this struggle: "It's not safe to keep up such activities", "A minority is out to cause trouble because they want a 35-hour week all at once at Air France". Do you think it's one of the employers who is saying all this? No, it's Fiterman, the 'communist' Minister of Transport. He's said he's ready to look after those who use the service - he's ready to break the strike.

From union official to minister of the left, every day makes it clearer that these people don't see things in the same way as the workers do. There's no doubting the facts - the unions and the left parties sided lock stock and barrel with the ruling class long ago. They want us to defend the interests of the capitalists at any price: "Save the Navy"; "Help the country out of the crisis... by making 'our' industry more competitive".

When it's so clear they're out to stop our strikes making difficulties for French capitalism - can you still listen to them? The unions are 'responsible' organisations - but it's the defence of capitalism they're responsible for! Siding with the unions is the same as siding with the ruling class. We should have unity - but with other workers. In this country and all over the world the workers should be against the unions and the rotten bourgeois parties.

The leaflets show that the problems faced by workers in one factory, even one country, are not unique. The tactics of the unions are broadly similar in different countries.

The leaflets emphasise the common struggle that workers have in different countries against the unions, and against the tactics of the left.

The leaflets also demonstrate yet again that the working class gains nothing from a left party in power. For workers in France, the struggle against the Socialist government of Mitterrand is just the same as the struggle of workers in Britain against the Tory government of Thatcher.

"The emancipation of the working class is the task of the workers themselves!" This is an old slogan but it's more and more on today's agenda. We can see the start of workers organising themselves when they form strike committees - but many workers are hesitant. It's as if they're surprised to find themselves organising outside the unions, and daren't go too far. It's as if they daren't go the whole hog:

- throwing out those who split us up by trade, by industry, by region, and by country, who weaken us at a world level and who sidetrack our struggle;
- seeing that our power doesn't come from isolation but through spreading the struggle,
- knowing that we are slaves and that the chains are gilded to stop us breaking them;
- linking our struggles to those of our brothers in other countries so we can destroy world capitalism, and the wages system that sucks our blood day by day.

We must follow up the latest events in the shipyards. We don't have to give in to discouragement. We can make sure that we won't be put down.EVELL INTERNATIONALISTE

## Another Betrayal! Fewer Illusions!

Bosses and unions can be content."Social Peace" has been safeguarded in the shipyards once again. It is important to draw some lessons after this latest sabotage of the workers' struggle .This isn't to turn the knife in the wound. It's so we can prepare for the future by making a balance sheet of this set-back and what caused it.Perhaps we can also avoid anything we do in future being smothered as easily.

DEMOCRACY-SOME HARD WORDS .Once more the unions have used democracy to get us back to work peacefully. When the unions sense that the workers are discontented, their usual custom in the yards is to call for a democratic vote. They organise secret ballots and include scabs, the ETDA, and leaders in the vote. When the unions are afraid that the majority is still determined on action ,they put up the level at which they'll accept the vote. This time it was 70%. They can then play a beautiful game by saying:"There isn't a majority" ;"There isn't enough" , or again "We've got to respect democracy."

This democracy only cheats us like it does in political elections. The unions give the supervisors the same power to decide as the workers, even though they don't have the same interests. Do you remember how many of the ETDA rushed to defend percentage rises? It's not surprising ,because a percentage rise can represent two or three times as much for a supervisor as it does for a worker. What reason do the unions give for making this democratic vote the first step? "So we can persuade our comrades to get involved".

There will always be scabs or workers who hesitate. If you put off doing anything until you've convinced everybody ,you might as well wait until the boss gets round to leading the strike! The hesitant workers make up their minds through the fire of action. You don't have half of the blank votes which crop up in a secret ballot if you experience the enthusiasm of raised hands in a mass assembly.

We shouldn't let the unions sabotage our strike under the pretext that higher grades aren't with us - or even more that we're not united when we've got 50% of the vote and are speaking with one voice. Yes, this democracy is crap.

We must organise ourselves in mass meetings, elect leaders we can revoke at any moment, so we can control our own affairs. To get this we've got to rip away the veil which hides the bourgeoisie and the unions :bourgeoisie democracy.

UNITY AND UNIONS DIVISIONS Many workers say that the set-back was caused by the way the unions split up. The Action Committee made a big thing of this in its leaflet of the 2nd November. They complained that each union was working separately. The Action Committee says that many workers believe the unions will side with them against a common enemy-the boss. This is just like two thieves falling out - each

wants our money and we're urging them to make peace! When the unions are arguing about the way to betray us , we mustn't call on them to unite against us! We've got to combat it by saying "Unions-Bosses: the same fight."

THE ACTION COMMITTEE After 3 weeks silence the Action Committee finally said something....it reproached the unions for being disunited and not doing their job properly. It's refused to get up a collection because it didn't want the least bit of autonomy from the unions. Only constant pushing from the workers could have changed it. What will happen to it now when the babbling stops? A fourth union ?

This action committee could have regrouped revolutionary workers and been a rallying point for all those who are sickened by the unions. It could have given courage and hope , but it stayed as an off-shoot of the unions. The ease with which the struggle was destroyed explains in part why it refused to go against the union sabotage of the strike.

This time the unions and the bourgeoisie were stronger than us - but it won't always be so. Everywhere the factory workers are showing us in a small way that they won't let things go. Although it was quickly crushed, the start of the struggle in the shipyards showed that the important fights are coming. We've not got to let the unions police them in the way they have . If the working class profits from its mistakes and realises the score, then the days of the unions and the bourgeoisie are numbered!

GROUPE COMMUNISTE VEUIL INTERNATIONALISTE  
12th November 1981

We have received the following appeal from revolutionaries organise themselves, the International Communist Party in Paris. nevertheless we believe it is While we have many differences with the ICP important to spread this information especially on questions of the way that as widely as possible.

#### SOLIDARITY WITH THE IMPRISONED MILITANTS OF BLIDA

After confessions extracted under torture and a sham trial, 5 militants and contacts of our organisation have just been convicted by the military court at Blida to sentences of three to ten years in prison. They are Mohsnaid Bensada, Rabah Benkhallat, Abdemalek Kendour, Ali Afkache and Mohamed Naaman. We salute these young revolutionaries who, in spite of 2 years of secret detention by the Algerian military police, did not hesitate to courageously maintain their beliefs before those who were about to condemn them.

This trial is a new episode in the repression which strikes the Algerian working class and impoverished masses daily, while the ruling class ,which resulted from indecency,cynically fattens itself by accumulating more and more wealth.Their relentlessness against the Blida militants shows the extent to which the Algerian bourgeoisie fears the spread-particularly within the army, the principal instrument for the defence of its domination and its privileges against the anger of the masses-of revolutionary Marxism which unmasks all its lies about the so-called Algerian socialism' and shows the oppressed the road to their emancipation.But neither repression ,nor bourgeois lies will prevent the distance between classes from growing wider each day. In Algeria and elsewhere, nor will it prevent the working class from seizing the weapons of Marxism to organise the battle against capitalism at the head of the impoverished masses.

We call all revolutionaries, all militants in the cause of proletarian emancipation to struggle with us for the freedom of the militants of Blida and for their release from the harts of the military police. As for the Algerian bourgeoisie, their cops and their torturers, we ask from them neither measures of liberalisation nor clemency. We have only one thing to say to them: the day when the working class begins the settling of accounts, the punishment that they will undergo at the hands of the masses will be equal to the suffering they have inflicted upon them.

THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST PARTY

To finance the defence and campaign for SARO with reference 'Solidarite Algerie', the release of these militants, cash or should be sent to: Editions Programme, international money orders payable to 20 Rue Jean-Bouton, 75012 Paris , France,

# CAPITALISM IN 1982: WAR AND WANT!

## What are you going to get from capitalism in 1982?

- More than 3 million will be out of work in Britain.
- The dole will be cut because it isn't going up as much as prices.
- Rents are going up. 24,000 were put out of their houses by mortgage companies last year. More will be homeless in 1982.
- Prices are going up, and up, and up .....
- School leavers will be paid less when they go on training schemes.
- Queues for medical treatment will be longer. There will be fewer hospital beds for the working class. You will wait longer for the ambulance or the fire engine. There will be more police about.
- Wages will be driven down further.

It's not just happening in Britain. Steel towns in the USA stand as idle as Corby and Consett. The new Socialist government in France is packing the unemployed into the dole queues. More than ever will starve to death in the Third World. Millions who will never work will pack tighter into the shanty towns of Asia, Africa, and South America.

On TV they pretend that unemployment's just number, like the number of dollars they say you can get for a pound. To the working class unemployment means poverty. It means losing your house. It means more kids with TB and malnutrition. It means that more strikes are broken by the threat of lay-offs - so wages are screwed down for all workers, whether they have a job or not. The whole working class shares in a new level of poverty.

In Coventry they gave free bus passes to the unemployed. They said people could travel to look for work this way. It didn't work. There's nowhere you can go to find a job.

## Have the unions and the Labour Party got an answer to this?

- They talk of work sharing. Does that mean the working class will be better off? No, it's just a faster way of sharing out the poverty than the Tories can sort out for you.
- They talk of putting the unemployed into unions. Does that mean more money for them? Does that mean less unemployment? No, it's a way of getting a tighter grip on unemployed workers. These workers were in unions when they lost their jobs, when their pay dropped to the pittance that the DHSS doles out. Much good unions did them then.
- They talk of increasing public spending. Does that mean more jobs? No, it's just shifting the jobs that are left under the control of the unions and the left - so they can dole them out to suit themselves.

What have the Labour Party and the unions done for the workers in Britain?

They've taken the credit for wage rises that the workers have won through their own strikes. They've doled out concessions when they've been scared stiff that the workers will throw them off. They've broken strikes and grabbed back wage rises when the workers couldn't resist. They've been parasites. They've grown fat on the blood of the working class - and then spilled it gleefully when the workers have challenged them, or when it suits us to defend their country.

Look at the record of the Labour Party these last 10 years! The Labour Party began the cuts in public spending. The Labour Party began to shut down the hospitals. The Labour Party cut wage rises below the level of inflation. They called it a Social Contract. Some contract! It was just a licence to rob and cheat. The working class got nothing out of it except for more misery, more poverty, and more unemployment. Wilson and Callaghan made the axe that Thatcher is using now.

Where were the unions whilst this was going on? They were fawning on the Labour Party as they still do. They were rushing forward to agree to wage cuts, to lay-offs, to shut-downs. At BL last month they shook their heads sorrowfully and said they could see Edwards point of view. BL couldn't afford to pay the workers any more. The British Government owns BL - and the same British Government is spending £10,000,000 on new missiles!

The unions and the Labour Party don't have an answer to what's happening. Like all good capitalists they're just out to cut the standard of living of the working class - and to pretend it's in your best interests! Capitalism has no future to offer you. All the parties and unions that support it are simply undertakers waiting to bury the working class.

You won't just become worse off under capitalism - you'll be murdered by it, because the only future it's got is World War III. Firms can't sell the goods they can make today - because the workers aren't paid enough to buy them. Profits can't be made unless the goods are sold. So customers have to be constantly grabbed from other firms - other firms have to be shut down and destroyed so the rest can survive. Look around you - firm after firm is closing down in Britain because none of them can get out of this trap.

What does the government do? It steps in to protect its industry and its markets. The trade war between rival firms turns into a trade war between rival countries. We got to this stage long ago. Now every country is getting ready for when the trade war between countries turns into a bloody war. World War III is coming along for just the same reasons as World War II and World War I. The capitalists can no more stop World War III than they could World War I and II,

You must destroy capitalism before it destroys you. The world doesn't have to be this way. The capitalists can't change it but the working class can. Get rid of the wages and profit system - and goods can be made because they are needed, not when there's somebody with the money to buy them. The working class can put an end to rivalry, to national frontiers, and to war. It can make a communist society that ends poverty, misery, and unemployment.

The first step is to get the unions and the Labour Party off our backs. Workers must run their own strikes and demonstrations against wage cuts and lay-offs. We must push back the attack by capitalism on our wages and our jobs - and push forward the struggle for our interests, and our world!

This leaflet was written and distributed by NEWS OF WAR AND REVOLUTION.  
Write to: NEWS, c/o 70 High Street, Leicester, Great Britain.

LETTERS, LEAFLETS, COMMENT...

## 1. Writing simply

One reader wrote to the International Communist Current about the need to write simply. He sent a copy to us:

London,  
11th July 1981.

... It is a serious mistake to expect but few of the working class to even read let alone understand such elitist jargon as the above (an extract from the 'Platform of the ICC, 1980).

Compared to its mass only a minority of working class persons think in such terms. Not for lack of intelligence but basically because the language is culturally opposed to them as a class. They cannot feel it as their own means of expression. Too scholarly with managerial style and higher educational quality, taught in repressive classroom conditions.

The overcrowded, forcefully competitive, authoritarian atmosphere in bourgeoisie-controlled state schools does a thorough 'put-off' job on most of our working class kids - becoming repulsed at the very thought of reading. In fact, made allergic to any form of 'supplied' learning in schools, and afterwards kept busy struggling to survive.

On the other hand, the bourgeoisie-owned media know exactly how to attract and hold the attention of the working masses - by printing daily psychological trash (at a reading level of about eight) together with the passive aid of addictive 'telly'.

If *World Revolution* wants to include 'use' in its purpose then it can by writing and sharing - at least partially - in the language most workers think and say their thoughts in, thereby communicating common understanding to action more efficiently. Let the employed/unemployed, women, men, young, elder of the working class themselves contribute their struggle to the print of *World Revolution*. Even if this means revolutionaries initially visiting workers, encouraging and taped discussions - then printing as spoken. Only then will ICC fulfill the words of its manifesto - namely: "to participate actively in the generalisation of proletarian struggles and revolutionary consciousness within the proletariat".

J.C.O.

In the October 1981 issue of their magazine *World Revolution*, the ICC replied to this letter. The full text can be read there, but it included the following extract:

**World Revolution, October 1981**  
 ..The only real hope of overcoming the predominant political apathy is that the practical problems of the class struggle will compel the working class to seek political and revolutionary answers to problems that today seem merely 'economic' or industrial. When this happens large numbers of workers will have very good reasons to make the mental effort to master the language of marxism; and, as in any scientific discipline, this means acquiring a certain mastery of the 'jargon'. Until this is done, it is not possible to retranslate scientific terminology back into everyday language...

**WHAT WE THINK ABOUT WRITING SIMPLY**  
 Reading is a skill. The ruling class looks on it like any other skill they want the workers to have. They'll let you learn as much as it suits them.

You needn't go into school to find out what reading skills are taught to kids. Just look around at what the bosses need you to read - timesheets and instructions at work, the Mirror and Star to form your views at home.

One woman said to us: "Since I left school, the only things I've read are the Mirror and DSS forms. The only things I've written are answers on DSS forms and notes to the milkman."

JCC's right in what he says. Reading is usually linked to oppression and exploitation as far as workers

are concerned. That doesn't mean workers won't read other things. They'll use the skill they've got in any way that suits them.

Communists today aren't facing the illiteracy of the last century. But they have to come to terms with the way things are - just as they did then. Last century much of their work was done by word of mouth - or by leaflets and posters. Few workers read Kapital. And if you want to read something simple - try Marx & Engels' Communist Manifesto. They also knew they had to write simply. Being a communist wasn't down to how well you read - because communists didn't sit back and say "the workers have to master the jargon".

People seem to be mesmerized by the idea of John Maclean teaching marxism to classes of hundreds on Clydeside. The thousands of workers that struck on the Clyde in World War I didn't all go to John Maclean's classes. Where did they get their marxism from?

The millions that made the Russian revolution in 1917 didn't get their marxism from Bolshevik educational classes either. Yet, these workers on the Clyde and in Russia, did hear and read communist propaganda. Nobody sat back and said, "We'll wait until they make the effort to communicate with communists".

The workers who went to John Maclean's classes did so because they'd heard him on street corners and at mass meetings. The workers who went to Bolshevik meetings did so because they'd heard them speaking at factory gates.

Who's going to send the workers along to see those parasites who claim they're waiting for the day when workers come looking for them? How will we recognise them? Will they wear special uniforms? Will all the other communists just stop what they're doing and say: "OK, pay attention to these guys who've been hiding from you for years"?

At the heart of these lunatic ideas is the notion of a small elite group that alone knows the score. They think they can pass on what they believe is wisdom to circles of less well-educated admirers. At the end there's just a set of instructions for the workers to carry out - do

this, that or the other, but don't think about it because it's our job to think for the working class.

You can see this in the little sects that turn their noses up at NEWS and what we're trying to do. They don't really take offence because we're not very good at writing simply. They don't think the effort should be made in the first place.

We find it very hard to write simply. We find it hard to strip away all the cendyfloss from a communist idea and get down to the main point of what we're trying to say. Why is this? It's because the language we have was taught to us so we could communicate with our masters. It's because many communists enjoy the game of debating minor points, of wrapping things up with more and more detailed analysis until they totally lose sight of why they are analysing anything at all. We've been trying to go beyond this.

The idea that marxism is something the workers have to learn is absurd. Marx looked at the workers' struggle and described what was going on, what caused it and where it was going. He didn't invent a method of doing this - he discovered the method that was at work in the workers' struggle. Every worker inherits that method - just as every intellectual has to learn it from a book.

Marx used words, and coined phrases, out of the vocabulary that he'd learned at school and picked up from books on economics. But the ideas he came up with aren't imprisoned by the words he used in the nineteenth century. How ludicrous to think that if you don't know the word that Marx used then you can't understand the ideas.

It's even more stupid to go on and compare the situation with the jargon used by scientists. Perhaps it is useful to invent a word, or give an old word a special meaning, if that saves you using several short ones. But the alternative way of saying it is still there if you're bothered to look. And this is not the principal reason why scientists use jargon anyway. Science is part of capitalist society - and it's bought and used by the ruling class. Scientists use jargon to protect their position in

society. Scientists use it because they do not have to account for themselves except to the educated ruling class. Scientists use it to prevent themselves being accountable - or useful - to the working class.

In NEWS we'll go on trying to write simply. We will make the effort to get our ideas to the workers.

Sussex, 31 October 1981

...As soon as railways, posts and telegraphs, steamships cut through the old national boundaries, there came a flood of international languages (about 80 of them were published) from bourgeois intellectuals. The only one that flourished was Esperanto, invented by a Polish Jewish coulist, based on roots taken from existing European languages. In 1905 took place the first international gathering. Shortly afterwards the first socialist groups came into existence in Germany and Austria. In 1921, the Workers Esperanto International was formed in Praha but immediately became involved in the Communist-Social Democrat struggle which was tearing the working class movement apart in those days. In 1930, the Communists left the International and established their own which disappeared completely under Stalin. The rest formed Sennacieca Asocio Tutmonda, ideologically based on the utopian and anarchist ideas of Esperantist being without nationality, but in practice an association of individuals using Esperanto for the cultural and educational aims of the class struggle, with the right of various tendencies to form their own fractions. After the Second World War, as Esperanto organisations slowly grew again in Soviet Russia and Eastern Europe, they joined the bourgeois organisation, UEA, continuing their attitude towards SAT.....

We agree with our reader that we've said enough about the ICC. We also agree that we must address the workers directly. We also want to print the discussions which take place between communists so that workers can get at these as well. In another part of this issue we've said how we'll try to balance what we do and sort the priorities out.

JCC says in his letter that the media is mainly a way to control the working class. That's a problem for us because it's hard to find out about the news that workers really need. We had a letter from another reader about this.

The policy of teaching thousands of workers Esperanto is not a practical one. In my opinion, the chief value of Esperanto to the workers at the moment is for the groups and parties and papers to organise a quick and accurate interchange of news, to build up international contacts which could be of practical value in action. For example, in Gdansk and Lodz and other places in Poland there are large Esperanto clubs with several hundred members each. With the outbreak of the strikes, although our papers carried many requests for correspondents from Poland, the Esperanto movement failed to make use of the situation....

Turning to other affairs. No.3 NEWS is very good. The international material is splendid and so is the simple statement of your position. Please don't enter into a long slanging match with the ICC. Once you have stated your position leave it at that. The worker outside to whom you are appealing is not interested in past disputes. He wants to get on with it. So hashing over old quarrels doesn't help. Concentrate on your own position. And address the workers directly, not through an argument directed at third parties in the struggle. The great stress must be on the capitalist-worker antagonism. Go for the capitalist all the time. We have to convince the working class that capitalism doesn't work any more and has to be replaced by workers organisations. Your leaflet for the CND rally was first class in this line. Same with the Birmingham hand out and the attack on the unions.

F.M.

The ICC can be contacted by writing to:  
BM Box 869, London WC1N 3XX.

## 2. Why we talk about the Working Class

We are printing some leaflets we have received. We also know that an adaptation of the front page of NEWS-3 was put out as a leaflet by the writer of the poem in London.

What unites the efforts of communists is the understanding that capitalism offers only war, and that only the working class can prevent war through the overthrow of the capitalist system. This is the basis of our intervention in the class struggle, and it can unite all our efforts today.

There is a new broadsheet produced in Manchester - Wildcat. This is produced by some members of Solidarity along with some former members of the ICC. We welcome their initiative and are pleased to introduce Wildcat to a wider audience than just workers in Manchester.

This is the kind of activity in which communist work begins, talking directly to workers about the situation they are in. We can't really put this better than a reader in a letter to us:

"...In my opinion you should concentrate on taking the simplest propaganda to the greatest number of people. The way to do it is regular leaflets shoved into the doors of working class homes. Half a dozen people could distribute 5000 in a weekend and keep it up week after week. People read them. You'll get at people far better than working hard to sell a few dozen papers. The workers don't believe that capitalism is out of date and has to be overthrown. This is the big thing to go after over and over again, picking up every point of the day to hammer it home. Then, on top of this, you have to give the working man faith in the strength of his own class. While turning out your journal, you should concentrate a good deal of your effort in gaining a real working class base in Leicester and area..."

F.M.

Perhaps Wildcat could take up the practical question of regular leaflets shoved into the doors of working class homes? This is a method we are

preparing to take up ourselves as a way of strengthening our local activity wherever possible.

The crucial question for today and the future is 'war or revolution'. Unless capitalism is destroyed, this economic crisis will end sooner or later in a war that will threaten human survival.

The ruling class will wage this war because the economic laws that direct the whole of capitalist society drive them towards no other course of action. It's not because the ruling class is evil, nor is it due to secret alliances or bad leaders.

Nations have no choice under capitalism but to compete against each other. They take up arms to seize or protect markets and vital raw materials. When the economic crisis reaches a certain point, the major powers are brought into direct conflict. Despite all their efforts towards peace, war is the only natural consequence of capitalist competition.

This view is central to our intervention through NEWS. It's a question communists cannot duck and must present clearly to the working class at every opportunity. Better than anything else it shows how far capitalism is finished as a sensible way of ordering society.

We don't think Wildcat spells this out enough as yet.

Wildcat directs attention mainly to the day-to-day struggles going on in their locality. It shows the enemies the workers face everyday - the unions, the Labour Party and the morass of 'the community'. The Laurence Scott article is a good example of their work.

As yet, Wildcat doesn't show what the overall direction of class struggle is at this time. It doesn't yet link today's struggle over pay, jobs or police brutality with the revolutionary struggle these same workers will engage in tomorrow.

# Wildcat

MANCHESTER FREE BULLETIN

## NO 2. PASS IT AROUND

### OUR OBJECTIVES

1. To report on, analyse and seek solidarity for important struggles amongst our fellow workers, especially in the Greater Manchester area.
2. To encourage independent working class activity outside of the control of the trade unions and in opposition to all political parties.
3. To aim at the overthrow of all governments, bosses and leaders by a revolution in which the majority of people, who at the moment are just expected to follow orders, all play an equal part. And we would like to see the creation of a world without the wages/money/market system where men can all have a say in how things are run, and where production is for human need not profit.

## LAURENCE SCOTT THE STORY SO FAR

In the 4th "of November two helicopters, in a commando style raid, carried equipment from Laurence Scott's under the protection of 100 police, some on horseback, while a contingent of pickets stood on helplessly. The police denied carrying out an occupation. Snipe's operation, but admitted having advance warning of it. Anderson claimed he went in with force because of a tip off about a secret load of flying pickets but, not surprisingly, these did not turn up.

Just a week before, the strike committee had sensed victory close at hand. Snipe, the owner of the company, and the factory as well as assuming his purpose, decided to re-open the factory for what the workers were told was a very important contract that only LS's could complete and on which Snipe had raised a 5 million guarantee. A national press appraisal that Britain's entire fleet of Polaris nuclear submarines would be rendered useless without the special

flame-proof motors made at LS and that the Ministry of Defence was behind Snipe's unexpected turnaround. But this may only have been another play to gain access to the factory in order to remove the equipment and products trapped inside since the occupation started in April. Snipe now claims to have succeeded in taking what he wanted and has dropped all talk of reopening the factory.

When he had previously attempted to open the factory soon 500 pickets, including many recruited from local engineering plants, turned up to prevent him. Snipe had only agreed to open up with a minimum of 150 workers, which he intended to hard-pick from the original workforce of 650. After a 7 month hard fight battle, the 250 workers still involved in the dispute naturally earned jobs for themselves. They had been the most militant and most determined in the fight against closure and so those whom Snipe least

CONTINUED OVER

## TROUBLE BREWING AT BL

Have you heard the one about the man who started work at the new Metro plant at Longbridge?

His job was to drive the completed cars off the assembly line to the storage yards. While the foreman was moving the cars round he saw a new Metro being driven out at breakneck speed - about 70 m.p.h.

"That looks' exciting, can I do that as well?", he asked the foreman.

"But only can you do it," came the reply, "you HAVE to drive like that, otherwise you won't keep up with the speed they come off the line."

This is a true story. And its no joke.

The strike at Longbridge over the reduction of time for breaks isn't a side issue. It's part of a deadly struggle of workers against the inhuman working conditions which are being forced on them. The unions having negotiated a reduction in the working week from 40 to 39 hours, management is not saying that all hours will be paid for by a reduction in the time for breaks of 11 minutes a day. So the workforce



The strike over pay was sabotaged by the unions. The unions said that BL couldn't afford to pay more than 3.7%. THIS IS TRUE... if you accept the 'bosses' logic - the logic of capitalism. The unions accept this logic. We have to make demands which the bosses can afford", they say. But all the bosses - and their system - can "afford" is more pay-outs, speed-ups, and redundancies.

Resistance against all these attacks - like at Longbridge - is important. But much, much more is needed. Against the systematic attack we're facing now, small strikes by isolated groups of workers can at best achieve only temporary success.

The unions, like the bosses, say we have to make sacrifices now, so that things will get better in the future. But there are no "better times ahead"... unless we fight for them. And, more and more, its going to be all or nothing. Either we accept the bosses' logic, or the working class as a whole tells them - and she is in its struggles - that "enough is enough".

# Wildcat

CONTACT

## LS cont.

The police action during the helicopter raid has demonstrated yet again that the 'Law and Order' the police claim to maintain is that which maintains the ruling class and the status quo. One shop steward refused to stand in front of the gates as he was arrested and charged with obstruction. If on that occasion the pickets hadn't outnumbered the police, more would have been arrested. "No one challenged the arrest," a shop steward said, but pickets were sent to the police station when it was feared the man would be kept in overnight and managed to obtain his release.

In the strike committee office down the street from the factory, a shop steward said he thought Snipes behaviour was 'understandable' but he'd been given 'bad advice'. In the world among the workers talked with confidence then of getting their jobs back, though they didn't see that as the end of their problems. Firstly they would still have to deal with an anti-union management and secondly with their union the AUEW, which is plainly and increasingly anti-working-class.

Early in August, before the occupation was ended by 40 bailiffs armed with clubs, sticks and batons, police who had made a sympathetic offer to re-open the plant on short-time working for 3 months, on the condition the workers paid back their redundancy money. This desirous offer was accepted by Duffy and Boyd, president and secretary of the AUEW, and put to the workers at two mass meetings where it was overwhelmingly rejected. At this point official support for the occupation and the £5 per week strike pay was withdrawn.

Because of the departure from normal TU practice of returning to the negotiating table (a matter Duffy was at pains to point out during the HE fiasco), the workers were naturally suspicious. That matter was then referred by the Manchester North District AUEW to the Final Appeal Court of the Union which was to meet during the week commencing October 12th. Mysteriously enough the plan got dropped from the agenda. The workers blamed Duffy and Boyd for this manoeuvre. The strike committee sent over 3000 letters to AUEW branches asking them to censure the EC as the next Appeal court to the Workers' Democracy. So far some 350 branches have responded. If this fails to get the strike reinstated they might as well rip up their union cards' one steward said. They believe Duffy is in favour of tearing them up. He is and is willing to break union rules rather than risk a confrontation. At the same time they think he is afraid of losing control of the membership. After all if they succeeded without official support it would show the leadership isn't necessary.

They hoped to send a mass picket to Snipes Head Office in Doncaster, but didn't see how "without getting

union support to mobilise the masses". Perhaps it is this view that has represented the major weakness of the LS campaign. Their reluctance to take their case outside the confines of the trade union structures which has demonstrated its inability to sustain the struggle and link the community and to other workers apart from those in the District AUEW. Instead it took the helicopter raid to bring the local community into the protest. The workers have to take the dispute outside the trade union which would clearly have been a political act. To recognise that the outcome of the fight at LS affects the interests of the working class as a whole is to fight against the capitalist class suffering from world recession and determined to make the working class pay for it, is perhaps too much to expect from an isolated group of workers. Or perhaps as one striking cynic put it, "they're only interested in getting their own jobs back, they don't care about unemployment?"

In the class war the capitalist class hold the big guns. They are willing to use all the agencies of the state, including the Trade Unions plus the threat of mass unemployment in order to try and divide any pacify us. The NU and Labour Party provide the unemployed with the counter in a surfeit of silly talk under the ironic slogan 'united we stand divided we fall'. Whilst most workers have their attention diverted by this and the strike committee steps seen off by the lack of financial support and are bound to be the losers. It must be increasingly obvious to LS workers and to many others that if we are ever to win this war we must unite across trade union boundaries and break from all these moribund structures.

STUPID PHRASES  
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THE RIOTS  
NATIONAL UNEMPLOYED WORKERS MOVEMENT CONFERENCE  
  
The young man from Mass Side, for allegedly throwing a petrol bomb at police as they drove vans at speed into groups of people, got six years in prison. Perhaps even more notorious has been the sentencing of 16 year old Simon Low in Nottingham for 'incitement to riot', because he gave out leaflets supporting the rioters. Although he had no previous convictions he received a vicious 3 year sentence. This kind of repression bears a striking resemblance to that handed out to 'anti-state activists' in Russia, which on rulers and their papers are so keen to condemn!

On the weekend of the 31st of October, in London, about 100 people from 37 organisations from all over Britain gathered together for a conference to launch a national organisation of the unemployed. New hope for the unemployed - unfortunately we don't think so. Full report in the next issue of 'Wildcat'.

And the riots aren't over yet. In early November police cars were overturned and petrol bombed in Walthamstow as people expressed their feelings with action.

If you would like us to mail you copies of Wildcat as they appear, please write enclosing £1 to cover postage.

Wildcat, Box 25,  
164-165 Corn Exchange,  
Hanging Ditch,  
Manchester M4 3BN.

## THE RIOTS

SOME SEEKS REVENGE FOLLOWING RIOTS

The young man from Mass Side, for allegedly throwing a petrol bomb at police as they drove vans at speed into groups of people, got six years in prison. Perhaps even more notorious has been the sentencing of 16 year old Simon Low in Nottingham for 'incitement to riot', because he gave out leaflets supporting the rioters. Although he had no previous convictions he received a vicious 3 year sentence. This kind of repression bears a striking resemblance to that handed out to 'anti-state activists' in Russia, which on rulers and their papers are so keen to condemn!

And the riots aren't over yet. In early November police cars were overturned and petrol bombed in Walthamstow as people expressed their feelings with action.

The direction of the class struggle is shown on an international level. For example, the struggle in Poland has given many pointers to the future struggles in all countries. Mass strikes, spreading outside of plant control and forcing the capitalist state to retreat. And even within Britain there are examples of wider struggles threatening to break out of one industry or one company using the tactics of flying pickets and mass pickets to escape the union stranglehold.

We believe that communists must place the living examples of workers in conflict with the state, and especially the unions and the left. Firmly in front of the working class. This is the way to present the truly international nature of class struggle in all countries. It is the way to show the strength of the working class. Small, limited struggles, in one place, however militant, can be worn down over weeks and months by the unions. Workers are forever told how weak they are. Communists must seize on the examples of militant struggles that have spread beyond their initial goals to emphasise how strong the workers are when they fight free of the chains of capitalism. Wildcat gives less emphasis to this than we do, at present.

We're not sure what Wildcat means by 'the majority of people' (its Objectives, no.3). Certainly the communist revolution will benefit the majority of people - the capitalist class is just a tiny minority of the world's population. Certainly the majority of people may well rally to the revolution, and fight for it when the time comes. Certainly all sorts of people are pushed around by the state in all countries and are forced into struggle against repression in order to survive.

But, where does the direction of the revolution come from? It can only come from the one class which alone can guarantee a future for humanity - the working class. The class which produces the goods, the necessities of life: the industrial and agricultural workers, the wage slaves of factories and farms all over the world.

Under capitalism, the workers only produce goods which capitalists can sell for a profit. But the method of working in association, in factories, using machinery and technology, which was invented by capitalists and for which they had to create a working class, is a method which would be able to feed, clothe and house the whole population in good health if production were organised for need and not for profit.

Capitalism has been unable to turn the whole population into either capitalists or workers. In all countries there are vast numbers of people trapped in intermediate layers. Some are clearly aspiring capitalists; there are whole armies of intellectuals; there are even greater armies of unemployed, of never-employed and of never-to-be employed outside of wartime cannon fodder.

While these layers are part of the 'majority of people', and will benefit in a material way from the communist revolution, they cannot themselves hasten that revolution, nor can they seize political power from the capitalist class. They cannot reorganise society because they cannot fulfill the basic needs of a population - food, shelter, clothing, good health. Only the working class can do this.

This is why we place so much emphasis on the CLASS struggles, and on the working class reorganising society and building a communist society. As it does so, all these many different layers will be brought into productive work, and become workers themselves. The working class will complete the task that capitalism has been unable to carry out. When the whole world is made up only of workers, then class society will no longer exist. Then workers can produce goods needed by a society that takes shape in their own image.

We're not putting down the 'majority of people'. They will play an active part. The working class must not turn away from their struggles, and nor must we. The struggle against oppression in all countries must be linked with the struggle for communism. Workers and other layers in society must fight together against a common capitalist enemy. Such unity will ensure the success of the revolution.

But only the working class, organised in workers councils and united on a world scale, can direct the course of the struggle to build a communist society. This is at the forefront of our intervention.

As well as Wildcat, we have received letters and leaflets from Solidarity in Manchester, Dundee and Aberdeen.

We are reprinting an leaflet from Aberdeen Solidarity about last summer's riots. (p.22). On the surface, this leaflet has a strength lacking at present in Wildcat. It says: "Workers on strike are fighting the same class struggle as the rioters".

We agree that last summer's riots were part of the working class struggle against capitalism. A major weakness was that they remained isolated from the struggle in the factories. But what concerns us here is the phrase: "...for more control over our lives.." which follows the class struggle idea.

The same idea crops up in a letter from MB of Manchester Solidarity.

Many different concerns can trigger the class struggle. The immediate trigger in last summer's riots was clearly police harassment, especially of young people, both black and white. The rioters may have sought for more control over their lives. They certainly tried to cut the police control over their movements on the streets.

But, the communist revolution concerns us most of all. To make that revolution, the working class and its allies in the other layers of society will smash all the institutions of the capitalist state: the police, DSS offices, dole offices, unions, etc. will all be put out of the business of controlling and regimenting our lives.

At the same time, the working class alone will have to evict the bosses, managers and foremen from the factories, and the bureaucrats from the offices. This is the only way the working class can set about providing for the needs of society after the revolution. The removal of capitalist laws and political controls over our lives is a necessary step, but it is not enough. Just as the seizure of the factories without the destruction

**MB's letter**  
 "I think workers do (rightly) want (more) control over their lives - over the work process and work conditions in particular, but also over other aspects of their lives - the point to stress is that we can't get any real conscious control over our lives within the framework of capitalist society. What minor advantages we may achieve in control of certain aspects of the work process, as with improvements in wages etc., are repeatedly threatened by the re-emergence of capitalist crisis. The effects of the crisis on wages and the basic material standard of living may well be the trigger which sets off major struggles in this period, but it is not the only aspect of the class struggle.

"There are clearly dangers in the co-optation of struggles relating to the question of 'control' - there certainly have been dangerous diversionary ideologies built up around the concept of 'self-management', but we can only avoid these dangers by addressing ourselves to both the positive and the negative aspects of such struggles. The 'material' needs of the working class are not static but are developed in the course of struggle over decades, and include today a lot more than just food and shelter etc. Whatever the trigger mechanism, it's capitalism's denial of all the accumulated needs of the workers which is creating the explosive material for revolution.

If our position has the danger of degenerating into an advocacy of 'self-managed exploitation', I fear yours has an equal danger of degenerating into economic determinism."

of capitalist legal and political structures is insufficient.

The class struggle is littered with examples that show how strong class struggle can be when it is located both in the working class neighbourhoods and the factories at the same time. Poland in 1980 shows this, Russia in 1905 and 1917, the Clyde in 1919 etc.

But this trigger in the attempt to 'control our lives' is not separate from the economic basis of capitalism.

the police steps up repression on the one or it's back on tearbreaks at Longbridge, it's the same economic elite behind both. At Longbridge, the need is to increase production with a smaller workforce in order to get the wages till and increase profits.

In the streets, rising unemployment creates the threat of increased theft, racism, which act against capitalist property. The police step up their powers to stop and search, break up small groups in case they turn into a mob, to protect capitalist property.

Workers experience a different attack in each case, but behind that attack lies property and capitalist economics itself. Unless we make this link between all the attacks on the working class and the economic foundations of this rotten system, then we cannot win in any piecemeal battles on this issue and then that can never succeed. The tactics of the left have failed for over 70 years.

The class struggle has to go forward on all fronts. Whatever the immediate trigger, the cause is capitalism and its failure to make sufficient profit. Lack of control over our lives is a symptom of the disease. The cure will not come through dealing with each symptom. We must get rid of the disease. Communists must constantly hammer this point and expose the common links between all struggles. That link is economic.

When we put forward this idea that only the producers of goods can build a communist society, we are often charged with 'economic determinism'. Solidarity raised this in a letter, and asked us who we thought made up the working class.

We've tried to show instead why we think the producers of goods are so important to the successful creation of a communist society. We don't write off the struggles of others - even those who are far removed from the working class, such as the poor peasants of the Third World.

Nor do we think that the class struggle is just the wage struggle at work. But the production of goods is at the heart of the working class, it's the centre of the antagonism between the

working class and the capitalist class. It's also the key to the provision of material needs once capitalist laws and political structures are destroyed.

During and after the revolution, the working class will begin to incorporate into itself all those who are able to contribute to the society in which everyone produces useful work to satisfy genuine needs, and benefits from the work of everyone according to his or her needs. In a future issue we should like to take up this question of the creation of a communist society after the revolution.

As well as the Solidarity (Aberdeen) leaflet, we also received a leaflet on nuclear power and nuclear war from Solidarity (Dundee). Here are some brief extracts:

"When our leaders - safe in the comfort of their own dear bunkers - order the war to start, who will be the ones to die? If you're not rich and especially if you live in an urban centre you can expect to be killed in staggering numbers. In such a carnage the only winners are the rich and powerful. OUR LEADERS will be left - East and West. With working class people killed off even out of proportion with their numbers we can accurately describe nuclear war as CLASS WAR."

"The whole nuclear cycle is deadly, capitalist and exploitative. DESTROY IT. Talk to people. Create a ground-swell of popular revulsion that can't be ignored. Take action yourself. By organising in an autonomous way in non-hierarchical groups we will see the models for a REALLY free society. Let's take hold of this chance while we still have time."

On the face of it, the first part talks about class struggle. But this is seen only as the attack of capitalism on the workers. There's no idea of a class struggle against capitalism.

More than this, in the idea that follows, of building models for a 'really free society', we see expressed the danger in the idea of 'control over our lives'. Here is the problem that comes from not locating the heart of the

struggle to overthrow capitalism within the productive sections of the working class.

There can be no models for a free society within capitalism. The nearest approach to such a thing is in the highest points of struggles, when workers organise mass assemblies and inter-factory strike committees which take up the job of distributing food and other essentials to the workers' neighbourhoods. Even then, capitalism prevents real freedom through the general shortage of essential goods which it constantly maintains.

We encourage all our readers to send us contributions such as these leaflets. They are a valuable contribution to the class struggle. In discussing what we see as their weaknesses we hope to open out the discussions amongst revolutionaries in public. We also hope to set those discussions in a more down-to-earth way than is often the way with 'polemics' between groups.

Solidarity (Dundee) can be contacted through Tayside Libertarian Socialists, c/o University Solidarity Society, Airlie Place, Dundee.

This is the Solidarity (Aberdeen) leaflet on the riots:

## RIOTS IN BRITAIN

All over Britain large numbers of people are confronting the police, are taking goods from shops without paying, are attacking property such as police stations and vehicles, shops, banks. What's happening is that many of us are no longer prepared to put up with harassment by the police, with poverty on the dole, with our lives being totally controlled by those in authority.

The government, police and media try to make out the riots are just 'mindless violence and hooliganism'. But in the riots and other actions people are, on the whole, not hitting out indiscriminately but are acting against property which belongs to businessmen and the government, and against the police who defend with violence the privileges and power of big property owners and the state. We do not pretend that everything that is happening is positive. But anti-social acts such as attacks on innocent people, the stealing of working class people's possessions, the burning of houses have been the exception, not the rule.

### HARASSMENT

The police continually harass certain groups such as blacks and young people. Widespread harassment and intimidation of blacks by the police in Brixton was revealed by an inquiry into police-community relations mounted by the local Lambeth Council. A black girl in Liverpool describes the treatment she and her friends suffer regularly from the police, "They stopped you and made you turn out your handbags for nothing, they hit people and called them black bastards." (Guardian 17.7.81)

In addition to the major riots in places like Brixton, Liverpool, Manchester, Leeds, Leicester, there have been actions in dozens of cities and towns all over Britain. In Aberdeen on 15th July around 50 youths confronted the police in Union St. 4 who were arrested were fined £100 each. Another confrontation - mysteriously not reported in the local press - was in and around Brynmawr Square, Northfield on the night of 17th July. Police and young people clashed after police moved in to disperse and arrest youths who were gathering. The police arrested around 15-20 people. At least one person was beaten up in the police van after being nicked.

The police frequently harass young people in the area, ordering them to 'move on' when 2 or 3 people are doing nothing more than sitting about聊天. The police do the same elsewhere, for example outside the Other Record Shop in Union st. While people have not yet taken action on a major scale in Scotland, there have been several localised attacks on police vehicles, police stations, shops etc. in Dundee, Glasgow, Paisley, Edinburgh, Perth and Blairgowrie over the past two weeks.

A major motivation in the riots has been people hitting back against police

Oppression. Apart from the Southall disturbances - when fascist sympathisers invaded an Asian area - the riots have not involved any clashes between 'ordinary' whites and blacks. In Liverpool, Manchester, Brixton and elsewhere blacks and whites have fought together against the police. This fact is ignored by such as Powell. He is trying to whip up racist divisions with his 'send the blacks home' rubbish. He wants to see blacks and whites against each other so that he and those like him can keep their privileges and wealth - divide and rule.

By looting shops people are quite rightly taking goods they need but are too poor to buy. Why should we put up with poverty and inequality in a world of potential plenty? Many have commented on the carnival-like atmosphere in areas where the police have been driven out. In taking such actions we gain a sense of our own power and a glimpse of how the world could be if all of us ran things, without any bosses, state or police.

Vicious repression has been the response to the revolt by the state and the Tory government - backed by the Labour Party. Many of those arrested have been badly beaten up. Merseyside police fired high velocity CS gas cartridges from a 12-bore shotgun directly at the crowd during the Toxteth riots. This inflicted extremely serious injuries on 2 people, nearly killing one of them. Brixton police smashed up homes and possessions in a 2 am raid.

CS gas, water cannon, plastic bullets are all now available to your friendly British bobby. First Northern Ireland, now mainland Britain. You can bet they'll be prepared to use these weapons not only against rioters but also against mass pickets of workers or anyone effectively opposing the system.

#### RESISTANCE

But Brixton, Toxteth and Moss Side show that if we have the numbers and the determination the authorities cannot control us. The riots are part of a struggle that's going on world-wide, in all aspects of society. During the past eighteen months there's been major clashes between people and police in the streets of Amsterdam, Berlin, Belfast, Brittany, Dublin, Miami, Zurich (heavily armed riot police couldn't prevent these riots). Workers on strike are fighting in the same class struggle as the rioters - for more control over our lives, against this profit-based system which is trying to solve its economic crisis at our expense.

If the struggles on the streets and the struggles in the workplaces can join together, if we can see the need not only to destroy this society but create a new one based on all having an equal say and producing for human need....then we can make the whole world a no-go area for all police, governments, bosses, authorities and leaders.

Printed and Published by Solidarity (Aberdeen)(correspondence only)  
c/o 163 King St., Aberdeen.

## 3. ORGANIZING OURSELVES

The Communist Workers' Organisation (CWO) says in *Workers Voice*:

"...without an organised political leadership which is clear about the way ahead the working class has no hope of achieving communism. For the CWO the conquest of political power by the workers can only be brought about by the most class conscious workers organising themselves as the advanced guard of the working class in a party."

The CWO claims that the Russian revolution threw up just one main problem - the revolution has to spread all over the

world or it dies. We think you can see more than this.

The Council of People's Commissars was made up of Bolsheviks in 1917. On 12th November it gave itself the power to make laws. It took that power from the workers councils.

This wasn't because the revolution wasn't spreading. The workers councils had only taken power a week before! It happened because the Bolsheviks saw no difference between them deciding things and the workers councils deciding.

Lenin explained it: "to unite in the persons of the elected representatives of the people both legislative and executive functions".

This mistake led to bigger ones - the same idea lay behind the measures that followed in the next few years and took all power away from the workers councils. The revolution started to die when it didn't spread - but the Bolsheviks stamped out any embers that were still burning.

This seems so clear to us that it specifies how communists act towards the working class at all times - not just during a revolution. They must not take upon themselves the right to decide for the working class.

Communists have the job of bringing out into the open:

- what workers have found to be the best ways of pushing forward their struggle;
- what workers have found to be dead-ends for the struggle;
- what problems workers face today, and what ways there are of overcoming them;
- the goal of revolution and the communist society.

Different people read different things from the Russian revolution. But what communists think of it affects what they do today, and how they do it.

In October we went to a conference in Manchester. Communists from Wildcat and L'ouvrier Internationaliste were there along with other people we've worked with in the past. We didn't agree on the best way of working together in the future.

Comrades from Aberdeens said: "We see the means for making an intervention in the class as being the class party." We think this view is just like the CWO - it gets the work of communists back to front when it comes to today.

A group of communists can do better than one on his or her own. But it's silly to put out the idea that communists can't put out propaganda until they've formed a sizeable group. We've got readers putting out leaflets and other propaganda, speaking out at work - all on their own. They are working towards the goal of communism.

The idea of endless chats about what sort of organisation before doing anything else is pointless. They're not acting as communists. The ruling class

isn't bothered, and the working class gains nothing from it. It puts the cart before the horse at least.

You've got to start out, like NEWS, or Wildcat. Organisation can only go ahead hand-in-hand with intervention.

First we want to find practical ways of working with other communists. It's a step forward when we can co-operate in writing and putting out a leaflet or a pamphlet. It gets our stuff into the hands of workers - we want it read by them, they're the only people who can act on it. Co-operating with other communists like this helps us see where we agree, and it helps the discussion along. Workers also get to read about those discussions.

At the Manchester conference, some comrades proposed a bigger and better paper than NEWS or Wildcat. This is a good idea. But some things have to come first. A regular paper isn't a one-off thing like a leaflet or a pamphlet. It can only happen when joint work grows. Then it will be a recognition of what has already come about as much as a proposal for new things.

#### \*1. The CWO

CWO PO BOX  
283, Clarence Drive,  
Glasgow G12. 20.10.81

...we would like to take up the issues raised by your split from the ICC, and the differing analyses we hold of the impasse of that organisation more fully. Thus we would like to organise a meeting with you...

...we would like you to send a delegate observer to the forthcoming CWO Congress....

...at some time in the future, possibly Easter 1982, we would like to organise a debate in London between yourselves, the CWO and the ICC on the present tasks of revolutionaries. Such discussion and clarification can only help overcome the weakness and isolation of the revolutionary left today.

CWO

We replied to the CWO as follows:

It's not clear to us that much discussion of the impasse of the ICC is really appropriate at this time. We're trying not to be sectarian about this. We're not sure either how much discussion of the relevance of the CWO is appropriate. We just don't think there's any organisation of communists that's well enough known at this time to merit such special attention.

However, we are quite prepared to discuss how communists organise themselves - what they do and why - in a general way. See, for example, the article in NEWS-3. As a further contribution we'll print extracts from your article in WV 5 in NEWS-4. Not the bits about us or the ICC, but the general points you make about organisation...

We want to see the discussion in public. That's why we're glad you wrote in WV 5, even though we don't agree with

what you wrote. We'd prefer to see how this public discussion gets on before we sit down prematurely with each other to swap accusations like 'substitutionist' or 'liquidationist'. We propose that a joint meeting on organisation be deferred for the present.

We should like to come to your conference, provided you realise we shall come to speak and not just observe, and that the gist of the discussions will get reported as widely as possible. As for a tripartite debate between CWO/ICC/NEWS, you do us too much honour to think that an inter-group debate with us will attract much attention. We counter-propose a public debate/discussion on the tasks of revolutionaries to which as many groups/individuals as possible within the revolutionary milieu can come. And where the result can be published as a pamphlet that reports verbatim all contributions.

#### NEWS OF WAR AND REVOLUTION

##### \*2. AFTER THE MANCHESTER CONFERENCE

Some people who went to the conference have suggested another meeting. There seem to be two ideas of what to talk about. One is that we should discuss a platform for a new organisation. Another is that we should discuss what's wrong with the ICC as a way of getting a better idea of what sort of organisation is best.

We reject both these proposals. We don't want to go to a meeting which only has these aims. In terms of what communists should be doing, they both put the cart before the horse - as we hope is clear from what we've said in this and other issues of NEWS. We're totally out of sympathy with the idea that organisation comes first for communists, and we're not likely to agree with the kind of organisation that's in mind.

##### \*3. PROPOSAL TO ALL OUR READERS

1. Communists in Germany, USA and Britain have written to ask for more copies of NEWS to distribute. We're happy to agree to this. Just write to us if you want to help in this way.

2. We've co-operated with other communists in writing and putting out leaflets. We're open to any proposal. Just write if you want to work with us in this way.

3. The Poland pamphlet (NEWS-2) sold out. And lots more has happened in Poland. We've proposed to communists in the USA that we could co-operate on a second Poland pamphlet in 1982. We also intend a pamphlet on BL soon. Any ideas for pamphlets, or contributions towards a pamphlet already planned, again, just get in touch.

4. We want to reprint articles, letters and leaflets we agree with, and put into print all discussions with readers and groups so that workers can get at it. We'll print as much as we can of the comments, criticisms, contributions sent to us.

5. We want to put out more leaflets than before. We want to see several thousand leaflets, a regular issue of NEWS and a pamphlet every four months or so. If you want to help put out leaflets, let us know (in this issue the leaflet 'Capitalism in 1982: War and Want' is available).

6. There must be other ways of working with you that we haven't thought of. Let us have your ideas - we'll either take them up, or they'll spark off a discussion.

## News of War and Revolution

we are against

CLASS SOCIETY - workers are exploited as long as class society continues.

CAPITALISM, EAST & WEST - Russia, Cuba, China, Yugoslavia, Albania and all the police states are as capitalist as Britain and the USA,

THE WAGES SYSTEM - the bosses and the state pay workers less than the value of the goods they make.

THE OPPRESSION THAT IS PART OF CAPITALIST SOCIETY.

SOCIALISM IN ONE COUNTRY - workers cannot make communism while capitalism survives anywhere on earth.

NATIONALISM - the workers have no country

WAR - wars have killed millions of workers this century.

PARLIAMENT & ELECTIONS - no capitalist state, nor any change in it, can help the workers at all.

LEFT & RIGHT PARTIES - Tories, Liberals, Labour, SDP, CP, NF, Trotskyists and Maoists - all serve the ruling class.

UNIONS - the unions are dead, and no new unions can be made to serve the workers. All unions serve the ruling class.

SELF-MANAGEMENT & NATIONALISATION - workers can't run industry in their own interests in a capitalist society.

COMMUNISTS ORGANISING WORKERS AND TAKING POWER FOR THEM - only the whole working class can build communism.

we are for

WORKERS DEFENDING THEIR LIVING STANDARDS - Unions and capitalist parties defend the bosses' profits, cut workers' wages and raise prices and productivity. The workers have no interest in this.

WORKERS ORGANISING THEIR OWN STRIKES - Shop stewards and union officials look after their own interests and those of capitalism. Workers alone must decide about their strikes in mass meetings. They must carry out their decisions through delegates elected and controlled by the same mass meetings.

WORKERS SPREADING THEIR OWN STRIKES - unions which offer to spread strikes are setting a trap to limit them. Workers must spread strikes by their own flying pickets and delegations.

WORKERS STRUGGLES AGAINST THE STATE - struggles must link up across industries, working class communities and countries, and attack all parts of the state.

WORKERS MAKING THEIR OWN REVOLUTION - no party can do this. Only workers can organise and control the workers' councils which will destroy capitalism.

REVOLUTION ON A WORLD SCALE - The Russian revolution was lost when it failed to spread to other countries.

WORKERS ORGANISING SOCIETY - The class which produces the goods is the only class which can bring communism.

COMMUNISM - A society of production for human needs, with no classes, no wages system, no oppression and no frontiers.

Communists must speak out on all these questions.